

What is Your Most Important Step When You Injure Your Spine?

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You were injured at work doing a task that you have done without problem for the last five years. What happened? You were pushing the same cart you pushed for years, and all of sudden there was a funny sensation or you felt a "pop" and the pain and spasm were immediately there... or, it felt "funny" and now you are off of work, still having the lingering sensation. Then, it seizes on you two hours after work. The pain is intense and the spasm is unbearable! You get driven to the emergency room and they examine you, take a couple of x-rays, tell you that you have a low back strain, give you rest and icing instructions and a prescription for a muscle relaxant and a pain reliever. You were also told to see your family doctor if the problem persists. You get the drugs and start to ice and lie on your bed still not sure what happened. Why all of a sudden? What did I do? What are you going to do next?

If this were your son or daughter experiencing this, what are you going to tell them to do? What you do next or what you direct that family member to do next is very important, and believe it or not it depends almost entirely on you! You or your family member have more than likely suffered a spinal ligament injury called a spinal sprain, and you may have even seen this diagnosis on your emergency room papers, as that is what sometimes will be diagnosed when the provider is not sure of what the problem is.

A spinal sprain is not usually life threatening, i.e.; you are not going to die from it either now or a short period after receiving it, however a spinal sprain can be very life impairing. This means that it is an injury that can begin the dwindling spiral, slowly eroding your enjoyment of life by providing you with chronic pain, reduction of activity and "loss of enjoyment" of many of life's activities.

According to the Mayday Fund at www.maydayfund.org :

"Chronic pain — commonly defined as pain persisting longer than six months — affects an estimated 70 million Americans and is a tragically overlooked public health problem.

The burden of chronic pain is greater than that of diabetes, heart disease and cancer combined.

A 1998 National Institutes of Health (NIH) report concluded that just the economic toll of chronic pain may be estimated at \$100 billion a year in the United States. It has increased significantly since then."

Spinal sprains are probably the most common cause of long term chronic spinal pain. So the question still remains, you are at home icing and on pain meds, wondering what really happened, what do you do next?

This is the most critical step: You need to find a doctor immediately and I mean immediately that can assess to see if you have a spinal sprain and if so, what is the severity and location! This is done with the doctor taking flexion, extension x-rays of your back to stress the ligaments so that a special test can be performed to measure how much damage that there may be. Some providers may also have you do a weight bearing MRI!

This doctor may be a Chiropractor, Medical Doctor, or an Osteopath; however there are some 600,000 medical providers, 60,000 Chiropractors, and 50,000 Osteopaths in the US to choose from? Which one do you choose?

This matters and can be the very key to reducing all of your potential factors that can contribute to your long term potential for chronic pain! You have to choose a provider who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of spinal sprains. You will know these doctors immediately as they will take the condition very seriously, until it is proven otherwise! These doctors know the long term potential for chronic spinal problems associated with moderate to severe spinal sprains and they perform their job with a high level of responsibility. They will

minimally take flexion extension x-rays and have them sent out for a specialized analysis (radiologist review) to help the doctors determine both the severity and the location. This special analysis to assist the provider with location a severity of the possible spinal sprain is produced by a radiologist through computer assistance.

So how will you know if you have the right provider? Ask them how they determine the severity and location of a spinal sprain. If they cannot immediately tell you what I just said above or there is any perceived hesitation (doctors are trained to know the answer to every patient question and hate to not know, so sometimes will answer a question without really answering it), you are probably not in the right office!

If you have no resources to help you find such a doctor, our company performs these types of reads and we work with doctors all over the country and may be able to help you locate one in your area. You can also ask your employer for such a doctor, call a local Workers Compensation Attorney's office to see if they know of such a doctor, or, call your insurance adjuster to see if they know of such a doctor. The bottom line is to find one quick! Get to them within the same week! Time matters here!

For assistance from us, simply call Spinal Kinetics at: 877-508-9729



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