

If you have lasting neck or back pain, you know how disruptive to your life it can be. You may be unable to think of little else except finding relief. The pain makes it hard to complete everyday activities. Physical therapy can help with back pain.

### **What is spinal traction?**

Spinal traction is a form of decompression therapy that relieves pressure on the spine and improves the body's ability to heal itself. It can be performed manually or mechanically and gently stretches the spine to change the forces and position of the spine. Spinal traction stretches the spine to take pressure off compressed discs. Spinal traction is used to treat herniated discs, sciatica, degenerative disc disease, pinched nerves, and many other back conditions. This straightens the spine and improves the body's ability to heal itself.

### **Am I a candidate for spinal traction?**

People with spinal conditions can benefit from traction therapy because the traction reverses the force of gravity. It is most commonly used to treat:

- slipped discs
- bone spurs
- degenerative disc disease
- herniated discs
- facet disease
- sciatica
- foramina stenosis
- pinched nerves which cause weakness or tingling that extends down the leg.

### **How is spinal traction administered?**

Spinal traction therapy can be administered manually or mechanically, depending on your needs. In manual spinal traction, a physical therapist uses their hands to put people in a state of traction. Then they use manual force on the joints and muscles to widen the spaces between vertebrae. In mechanical spinal traction, you lie on a table that is equipped to stretch the spine.

### **What are the benefits of spinal traction?**

Spinal traction is a non-surgical way to relieve pain and correct problems in the spine. While it does have some potential side effects, spinal traction offers consistent relief for most people. There are no long-term risks of spinal traction. Some side effects may occur during or after treatment. Many people experience muscle spasms after traction. Some have pain in the treated areas. Spinal traction is not for everyone. A physical therapist can determine if the risks are worth the potential rewards based on your medical history. Before undergoing spinal traction, you must speak with a physical therapist to create a total-management physical therapy plan. Spinal traction often works as an enhancement for other therapies. You will most likely be given home exercises to perform before and after spinal traction.

### **What are the results of spinal traction?**

The results of spinal traction include pain relief, centralized symptoms, proper spinal alignment, and decompressed joints. Spinal traction stretches the muscles and bones in the back to combat

the effects of gravity. Under the right circumstances, this could significantly improve the way you move and feel throughout the day.

**What is the outlook after spinal traction?**

With the help of other physical therapies, many people find great success with spinal traction. Treatment reduces pain and the body is more capable of healing itself. Some people only need spinal traction therapy for a short period of time.