



Cauda Equina Syndrome



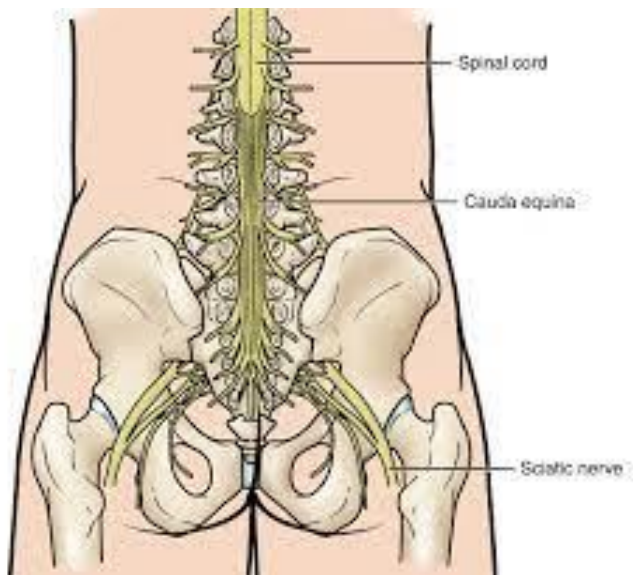
THE
OSTEOPATHS
Physical Therapy & Injury Rehab

Introduction

This leaflet aims to provide information on the Cauda Equina Syndrome (CES). By the end of this leaflet, you should know how CES could affect you, what the warning signs are and what to do if you get these warning signs.

What is CES?

CES is a **rare** condition affecting a group of nerves called the Cauda Equina



They control ->

- Movement of the legs
- Bladder and bowel
- Sensation to the skin around the buttocks, back passage, genitals and inner thigh

CES occurs when these nerves get compressed. The most common cause is due to a disc bulge in the lower back entering the space of the nerves.

Warning Signs

Can lead to permanent damage and/or disability.
In the event of CES you will need emergency medical attention.

A delay in diagnosis might impact recovery and lead to permanent incontinence or paralysis of the legs.

What you should look out for

- Loss of feeling or pins and needles between your inner thighs or genitals
- Numbness around your back-passage or buttocks
- Altered sensation when wiping after the toilet
- Difficulty initiating urination
- Difficult with cessation of urination
- Inability to feel when passing urine
- Urine incontinence/leakage
- Unable to feel when bladder is full or empty
- Bowel incontinence/leakage
- Reduced feeling during bowel movements
- Inability to achieve erection or ejaculation
- Reduced sensation of genitals during sexual intercourse



Emergency Attention

Any combination of the previous warning signs could indicate CES, and you should seek emergency medical help immediately.

You should immediately go to your local A+E department and can bring this leaflet to help explain your symptoms.

Investigations

A spinal MRI is conducted with CES is suspected. This scan can confirm or rule out this condition and reveal where in the spine the issues stem from.

Treatment

Urgent surgery is often but not always required to relieve the pressure on the nerves.

Back Pain and CES

Many people have a combination of back pain, leg pain, leg numbness and leg weakness. These symptoms can be distressing but you don't necessarily require urgent medical attention.