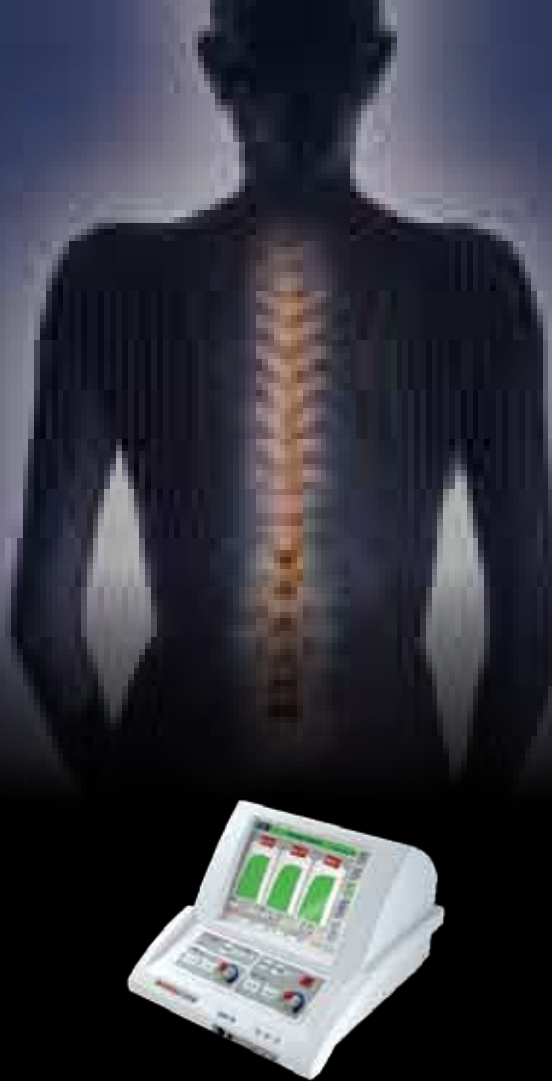


*An RFA Procedure of the Sacroiliac Region is an outpatient procedure for treating low back and buttock pain. This information has been provided by your doctor so you can better understand this procedure. Your doctor will make the best recommendation for your specific needs.*

*This pamphlet is for general education only. Specific questions or concerns should always be directed to your doctor. Your doctor can explain possible risks or side effects.*



# RFA OF THE SACROILIAC NEURAL TISSUE

*for Treating Low Back and Buttock Pain*



*An outpatient procedure for treating low back and buttock pain*

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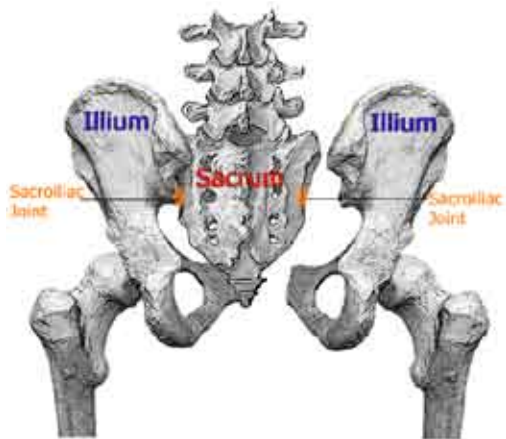
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# Radiofrequency Ablation of the Sacroiliac Neural Tissue

## WHAT ARE SACROILIAC JOINTS?

Sacroiliac Joints connect your spine to your hip bone. They connect the bottom of the spine, called the sacrum, to the outer part of the hip bone, called the ilium. You have two sacroiliac joints. One is found on each side of the sacrum. Sacroiliac joints help control your pelvis when you move. They help transfer forces from your lower body to your upper body. Each sacroiliac joint has several nerves and ligaments.

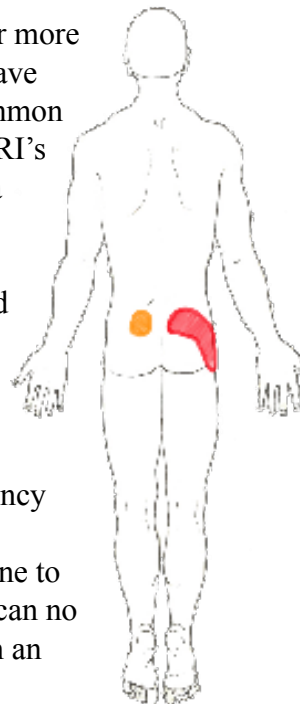


## WHAT IS SACROILIAC JOINT PAIN?

You may feel pain if a sacroiliac joint is injured. At times it may feel like simple muscle tension, but at other times the pain can be severe. You usually feel sacroiliac joint pain in an area from your low back down to your buttocks. But sometimes, if a joint is very inflamed, pain may even extend down the back of the leg. The diagram shows where sacroiliac joint pain usually is felt.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE SACROILIAC JOINT PAIN?

If you have pain in one or more of these areas you may have sacroiliac joint pain. Common tests such as x-rays or MRI's may not always show if a sacroiliac joint is causing pain. Your doctor can perform other tests to find out if you have sacroiliac joint pain.



## WHAT IS AN RFA?

An RFA uses radiofrequency energy to disrupt nerve function. When this is done to a sacral nerve, the nerve can no longer transmit pain from an injured sacroiliac joint.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING RFA?

An RFA may start with an IV (medicine given intravenously) to help you relax. A local anesthetic will be used to numb your skin and the track where the RFA probe will be placed. The doctor will insert and position an RFA probe parallel to the SI joint, so that it is overlaying the nerves which intersect the joint. Fluoroscopy, a type of x-ray, will be used to correctly position the device. Once the probe is properly placed, radiofrequency energy will be used to disrupt the nerves related to pain of the sacroiliac joint.

Fortin JD, Dwyer AP, West S, Pier J. Sacroiliac Joint: Pain Referral Maps Upon Applyg a new Injection/ Arthrography. Spine. 1994; 19:1475-182

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER AN RFA?

You will be monitored after the procedure. When you are ready to leave, the clinic will give you discharge instructions. You may also be given a pain diary. It is important to fill this out because it helps your doctor know if the RFA treatment was effective. Take it easy for several hours. You may feel sore for two to three weeks. This is normal. It may be due to muscle, ligament and nerve irritation. Your lower back may feel numb, weak, or itchy for a couple of weeks. Complete pain relief normally takes three to four weeks.

## HOW LONG CAN I EXPECT PAIN RELIEF?

Nerves regenerate after an RFA, but how long this takes varies. Your pain may or may not return when the nerves regenerate. If it does, another RFA can be done.

