

History:

- January 2021 started experiencing sciatic pain only with menstrual cycle; period and ovulation.
- March 2021 worsening nerve pain throughout cycle - began amitriptyline
- August 21 pain /mobility continued to worsen, with development of hip and groin pain. Able to mobilise with walking stick short distances only.
- September 2021 and January 2022 corticosteroid injection to SI joint, no significant improvement
- December began Slinda OCP with minor improvement, "stabilised" peaks/troughs of pain but daily mobility and tasks impacted and reduced.
- May 2022 ceased Slinda, dramatic and rapid increase in pain and deterioration of mobility.
- From May onwards: could not walk, stand or sit without shooting pain from right buttocks, down back of thigh and calf, into heel and under sole of foot.
- Only able to mobilise limping with walking stick with significant amounts of Tramadol
- On period and ovulation, completely bed-bound for 5-6 days, taking large amounts of pain relief and lying on left side only to tolerate. During these times shooting pain down right leg occurred even when lying down. Difficulty sitting to eat and getting to the toilet, incurred rapid weight loss.
- Surgery with Dr. Danny Chou 31/08/2022

Symptoms:

- Sharp, burning pain in right buttock, sometimes localised but usually shoots down the back of right leg, into right calf and heel and under sole of foot
- Tingling that spread over right buttock and down back of thigh and calf, and even under sole of foot.
- Loss of function/weakness in right leg: mobilised with walking stick and lopsided gate, dragging right leg out to the side. Difficulty lifting right leg properly, feeling of weakness and heaviness.
- Foot flexion toe to shin greatly reduced compared to left side
- Buttock, thigh and calf muscle visibly reduced right side
- Worsened significantly after any mobilisation, especially weight bearing: walking, sitting, standing, bending, reaching up or twisting.
- On **bad** day (typically lasting 5-6 days with ovulation and 5-6 days with period): lying on left side only in bed, taking up to 200mg Tramadol per day to tolerate pain. Excruciating pain on standing (like hot knife into right buttock with each step, and burning down leg) and getting to the toilet, had to eat propped on side in bed and use elbow crutches to get to the toilet. Unable to drive, do housework, cooking etc. unable to lie on my back or right side. Wheelchair for any distance longer than a few metres.
- On **good** day: after taking regular tramadol able to drive short distance (5 mins) to son's school, drop him off and come back home (total 20-30 mins of sitting and standing) in significant pain, and must lie in bed all day to recover. Wheelchair for distances longer than 50-100m

- Pain became significant and needed to take tramadol or lie down after 5 mins of walking or standing (weightbearing), and 15 mins of sitting
- Worsened after shower, had to use shower chair and often husband helped.
- Day-to-day- life/duties compromised significantly as even cooking/hanging up washing etc. required too long standing or sitting.

After Surgery:

- Immediately noticed nil sciatic nerve pain
- Able to lie on back without pain
- Able to weight bear with nil sciatic nerve pain
- Able to walk without sciatic nerve pain
- Able to sit in bed with nil sciatic nerve pain
- Able to lift leg up straight without dragging (although inner thigh muscle fatigues very quickly as it has been significantly wasted!)
- Able to lift toes to shin almost same amount as left side
- Even on my “good” pain days there was never a moment completely pain free in my right leg. Now I am finally free of that pain!
- I feel like I’m floating! It is a very strange feeling finally being able to experience this moment I’ve been dreaming of! I am blown away by Dr. Chou’s incredible kindness, Neuropelveology expertise, accurate assessment and successful complex surgery. I am grateful for eternity.