

## ‘Understanding Low Back Pain and MRI’

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### OUCH! My MRI says I have.....

Understanding a little more about back pain, do you need an MRI? How we can help as chiropractors?

I had a low back injury when I was younger, which is actually got me into chiropractic. I was in agony, the pain had got to the stage where I couldn't put my own socks on without pain. I tried everything, Physiotherapy, Exercise, nothing was helping so what did I do? I went straight to the GP and begged for an MRI scan to see what was wrong. With reluctance they gave me a scan. The results showed I had an L4/5 Disc bulge. Great, I finally have an answer! But what does this mean? Will this stay with me forever? Should I stop moving?

As I went through my chiropractic education at university I learnt to question of the results of the MRI might not provide the full picture.

A group of papers published by the Lancet were written by a large group of international experts in back pain, who has collaborated to raise awareness on low back pain.

The papers tell us that low back pain is ‘an extremely common symptom, experienced by people of all ages’ it peaks in your mid-life and

is more common in females over males. It says how at any one time there are 540million other people suffering with you. In the UK alone there has been a 12% increase in how likely a person is to experience disability because of back pain.

This is going to have an effect on your business, or the business you work for.

### You are not your MRI!

Did you know there is no link/correlation to the amount of tissue damage seen on an MRI and the amount of pain you feel?

If you take people *without* back pain and put them through a CT scan or MRI, you get some surprising results.

% OF PEOPLE WITH “DISC DEGENERATION”

**37%** of 20 year olds

**80%** of 50 year olds

**96%** of 80 year olds



% OF PEOPLE WITH “DISC BULGING”

**30%** of 20 year olds

**60%** of 50 year olds

**84%** of 80 year olds

You have a 'degenerative disc' but what does this mean?

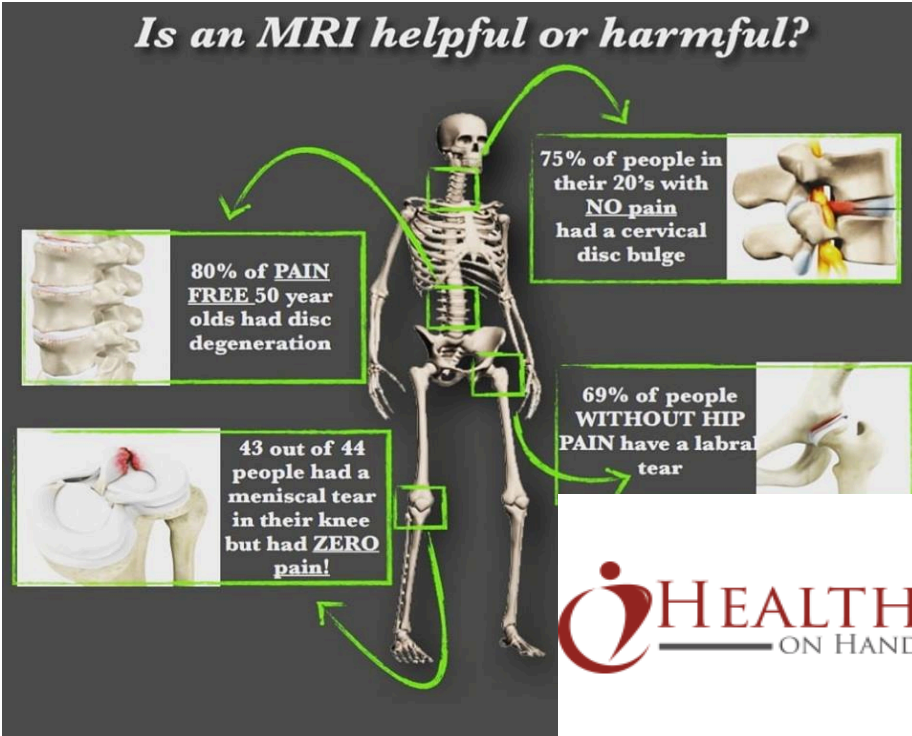
Well according the latest research not much!

80% of PAIN FREE 50 year old's have disc degeneration, 30% of people in their 20's are walking around with a disc bulge in their back and don't know it!

The reason I bring this up is because imaging can be a powerful tool, and when you are labeled as having some sort of structural "damage" it has a negative impact psychologically, when it can be a completely normal process of aging/activity.

So remember you are not always what your MRI tells you in terms of musculoskeletal pain, and its more often than not worth seeking some sort of physical therapy before opting for imaging or surgery.

*Is an MRI helpful or harmful?*



80% of PAIN FREE 50 year olds had disc degeneration

75% of people in their 20's with NO pain had a cervical disc bulge

69% of people WITHOUT HIP PAIN have a labral tear

43 out of 44 people had a meniscal tear in their knee but had ZERO pain!

**HEALTH**  
ON HAND

For further information on chiropractic and if it can help you or your colleagues please call Health on Hand Mansfield, 15 St John Str, Mansfield, on;

**01623 635333**

Or visit [www.healthonhand.co.uk](http://www.healthonhand.co.uk)

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