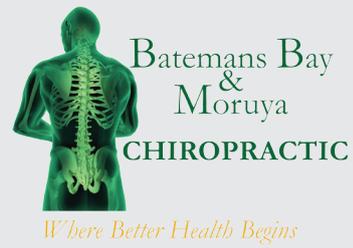


# RIB PAIN



## RIB PAIN

Pain from the ribs is usually described as sharp, stabbing pain. You may also feel increased pain when you take a breath. So it is not surprising that people are often rushed to hospital thinking something very serious has happened.

If you have had a fall and actually sustained a fracture it is easy to understand and accept why the pain is there. But if you have sustained a, so called, costo-transverse sprain, which often does not relate to any major trauma, it is much more disconcerting and people often think they are suffering a heart or lung problem. It is common for people to think they are having a heart attack, hence the name 'pseudo angina'.

Rib pain has been given many names, costochondritis, intercostal neuritis, costo-transverse sprain to mention a few. The name intercostal neuritis, meaning inflammation of the nerve between the ribs, is often used if you have pain radiating along the ribs to the front of the chest. A costo-transverse sprain is an injury that people often wake up with. Sometimes it is caused by an awkward sleeping position or caused by turning in bed, or something that happened the day before but was too mild to cause significant pain right away.

Chiropractors deal with rib pain on a regular basis and do so successfully. Rib pain tends to be acute in nature and therefore respond very quickly, usually within 2-3 chiropractic treatments.

When chiropractors see patients with chronic rib pain there are other indicators such as a slouched posture with forward drawn shoulders. Chiropractors often find that the pain is located at the apex of the curvature of the mid back (kyphosis) or if you have a scoliosis. It makes sense for us since that is the point under most load and strain, making the muscles fatigue resulting in chronic strain of the supporting ligaments. This is often seen in people who are generally unfit with:

- Poor thoracic core muscles;
- Increased thoracic curvature (kyphosis);
- Sedentary occupations;
- Women with large breasts;
- People who carry loads for prolonged times;
- And in scoliosis of the mid-back.

To help these patients in the long term, apart from treating the underlying spinal problem with specific chiropractic adjustments, it is extremely important to address the postural problem and core muscle weakness.

If the condition is severe enough the cartilage between the rib and the sternum (breast bone) can become irritated and inflamed. This creates a very sensitive area in the front of the chest, which is aggravated by movement and even breathing.

If there are any suspicion of a heart related problem or other problems that chiropractic treatment can't help, the chiropractor will refer you to your doctor or hospital immediately.

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