

Spinal traction is that applies a long term stretch to the articular joints and soft tissues, and it's used commonly on the cervical spine and the lumbar spine and also the thoracic spine by a physiotherapist. So spinal traction is often used when there's a spinal injury or there's pain in spine or pain down the arms from or the legs from nerve injuries.

There are two ways that traction can be applied. First one is by a physiotherapist using their hands. So that's manual traction, and tends to be very specific, maybe a shorter duration of traction. The second way that traction be applied is through a decompression machine, where the patient lies on a machine and the traction is applied at a relatively low grade and weight, but for a longer duration, up to about 30 minutes even.

Spinal traction has several effects on the spine. It can obviously decompress the spine and the vertebral structures such as the discs and the vertebral joints, and therefore decrease irritation on the nerves by increasing the space in the spine where the nerves exit. It can also decrease muscle spasm, increase blood flow and decrease the sensitivity and pain in the spine.

The conditions that can often be helped in our disc injuries, whether nerve injuries or nerve pain down the arms and legs. It can help in advance degenerative changes such as stenosis, and it can help in just simply stiffness in the spine created by the joints from things such as sitting too long at the desk or traveling or lifting heavy objects.

For a person that spinal traction might be helpful for the first step is to see a physiotherapist assess the condition and assign some symptoms and to eliminate any risks to the patient. And when the patient receives spinal traction, there are some things that can happen after traction, such as post traction soreness, which is quite normal and but generally it should be quite comfortable.

Traction can be used over time. Usually it's over several weeks, two to three times a week, where the patient comes in and receives either by the physiotherapist or by a machine, and the results are generally progressive, and people feel better as treatment goes on. Not every condition has a certain number of treatments a week, dependent on the patient and the signs and symptoms of condition.

You want to bring down your pain and any discomfort in your back and legs before continuing with exercise therapy, because the muscles will strengthen and respond better to exercise after the pain and sensitivity has come down.

If people have more questions about spinal traction, or if they think that it might help them, they should consult in their physician just to rule out any risks and to see a physiotherapist to rule out any risk and assess them properly before applying traction.

