



Dr. Pankonin's Guide to Peripheral Neuropathy

This free report was written by Kyle J. Pankonin, DC, FACO, DACCP, CFMP, CCEP, a board-certified chiropractic orthopedist with nearly two decades of clinical experience treating some of the most challenging pain conditions in the human body, including peripheral neuropathy. In addition to this training, which helps him properly diagnose conditions and offer research-based non-drug and

non-surgical treatment options, Dr. Pankonin is also a board-certified functional medicine practitioner. This specialized training helps him find the root cause of almost any health challenge, including peripheral neuropathy.

LIVING WITH PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

I want to start this report by addressing the suffering and fears you likely are experiencing if you are living with this tough condition. You may fear falling because you don't have much feeling in your feet. Most people with neuropathy have balance issues. Older patients may be afraid of an accompanying hip or other fracture with these falls, which is a legitimate fear. Those of you with diabetic neuropathy may fear developing ulcers and even possible amputation. Nearly 86,000 Americans each year undergo amputations as a result of uncontrolled neuropathy. **The symptoms of neuropathy are life-changing and many people suffer greatly: burning, tingling, pain, loss of balance and difficulty sleeping.**

While there are no absolute guarantees in healthcare, for many of you reading this guide there is hope for significant and meaningful improvement to your condition. There are advanced research-based non-drug and non-surgical options now being used throughout the United States. **These are options your traditional doctor will not tell you about.** There are ways to improve circulation to damaged nerves; to wake them up and lessen pain. Better sleep, less pain, improved balance, and overall better quality of life is possible with many people currently suffering from peripheral neuropathy.

Let's talk about:

- What causes neuropathy
- How modern medicine approaches this problem
- Different types of neuropathy
- Alternative treatments that work
- How to determine if you are a good candidate for alternative types of treatment

Peripheral neuropathy is a disorder of the peripheral nerves, meaning those outside of the spine, usually the arms or legs. It affects feet and/or hands, causing weakness, numbness, tingling and pain. Peripheral neuropathy can come and go, slowly progressing over many years, or it can be severe and debilitating.

If diagnosed early, it can often be controlled with the right treatment. Neuropathy is really your doctor's word for nerve damage. It is estimated 20 million patients in the U.S. suffer from this diagnosis.

CAUSES

The most common cause of neuropathy by far is **diabetes**. When glucose (sugar) is too high in the body over a long period of time it can lead to nerve damage and neuropathy. If the damage is not contained it can lead to ulcers and amputation may be necessary. Another common and often overlooked cause of neuropathy is the use of **cholesterol (statin) medications**. Cholesterol is actually the biggest component of the protective covering surrounding nerves. When you artificially lower cholesterol too much it damages the protective nerve covering and can lead to neuropathy.

Another unfortunate cause of neuropathy is as a side effect of **chemotherapy**. While chemo may be what was needed to treat the cancer, the toxic effects can also be quite harmful to the nerves. **Heavy metal toxicity** may be responsible for some neuropathy cases. Overexposure to lead, mercury, aluminum, arsenic, or cadmium, to name a few, can cause damage to the delicate nerves of the body. **Nutritional deficiencies** of vitamin or micronutrient levels may be to blame, most commonly B12, B6 and B1.

Most other neuropathy cases that do not fall into these categories are termed **idiopathic**, which means a cause cannot be determined. As a functional medicine practitioner, I simply do not believe no cause can be identified. I believe there is always a cause and many times if you find the cause of a condition you find the key to treating it. We also treat many patients with compressive neuropathy, which is caused by conditions like spinal stenosis (narrowing of the spinal canal) or disc bulges or herniation putting pressure on nerves. Carpal tunnel syndrome is a direct compression of a nerve at the wrist so needs to be checked for in patients with hand symptoms.

Finally, one common trait in all peripheral neuropathy cases is INFLAMMATION. **If you don't get whatever is causing your inflammation under control, your nerves will never be healed.**

SYMPTOMS

The specific symptoms you experience will depend on which parts of the nerve are affected. If the **sensory** part of the nerve is affected, there will be a loss of sensation or over-sensation of pain, tingling or burning. If the **motor** part of the nerve is affected, muscle weakness, cramps, spasms, loss of balance and coordination issues will occur. If the **autonomic** nerves are damaged this can affect involuntary problems (functions you can't control). This can lead to abnormal blood pressure and heart rate, reduced ability to perspire, constipation, bladder dysfunction such as incontinence, and sexual dysfunction. Most patients have a mix of symptoms with different areas of the nerves being affected.

MEDICAL TREATMENT OPTIONS

Most over-the-counter medications like aspirin or ibuprofen do little or nothing to target nerve pain. One drug called Cymbalta has been FDA-approved to treat diabetic neuropathy. Side effects include nausea, dry mouth, sleepiness, fatigue, constipation, loss of appetite and sweating. It can also cause dizziness and hot flashes. The most common medication I see prescribed for non-diabetic neuropathy cases is Gabapentin (Neurontin) which is an anti-convulsant and not even FDA-approved to treat neuropathy. Common side effects include dizziness, drowsiness, unsteadiness, memory loss, lack of coordination, difficulty speaking, viral infections and tremors. There are some other medications used on occasion, but the common denominator is none of them are meant to *cure* neuropathy. **Medications will not fix your neuropathy, only mask the symptoms.** While medications may offer symptom relief at first, over time this relieving effect will lessen as the underlying condition continues to worsen without any action being taken to actually fix it, not just cover its symptoms.

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT OPTIONS

First let's discuss the functional medicine component that can help address some of the root causes of neuropathy. If you are diabetic, the first and most important thing to ensure is adequate blood sugar control. The goal is to have an A1C level of 7 or less. Functional medicine can help to pair patients with the right type of diet and if necessary the right weight loss program. We can also test to determine if there are any deficiencies in key nutrients that help better control blood sugar.

Heavy metal toxicity, nutrient deficiencies and anemia can all be overlooked neuropathy culprits. Specific functional medicine testing can determine if any issues are present and need to be corrected. As I mentioned before, inflammation **MUST** be addressed.

I encourage you to read [The Deflate Diet](#) by David Seaman for guidance in how to approach eating correctly to reduce inflammation and promote healing.

If taking cholesterol (statin) medication is contributing to your neuropathy by interfering with nerve protection, you need to find an alternative way to control and maintain healthy cholesterol levels. Hint: the answer lies in the book I just suggested. If you've undergone chemotherapy, gentle detoxification may be needed to rid your body of this poison. There is specific testing available to determine how well your body can detoxify. The bottom line is in most cases a root cause can be found and your neuropathy appropriately addressed.

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS THAT WORK

There is no one magic bullet cure for treating neuropathy. It takes a comprehensive approach to find and address the cause then correct or at least improve the damage that has occurred. We use the following advanced, research-based treatment components:

- **MLS (Multiwave Locked System) Laser Therapy** is a class IV laser and is the most powerful available on the market for treating nerve conditions. Red Rock Chiropractic Center is the only clinic in this entire part of the state to offer this breakthrough technology. Laser therapy penetrates into the nerve cells and stimulates energy production which promotes healing. The laser uses two different wavelengths: one works on pain and one works on inflammation. They are synced together to produce a synergistic effect.



Cutting Edge Multiwave Locked System Therapy Laser

- **NeuroMed Electroanalgesia** generates an electric current to help stimulate normal nerve firing. It helps to “wake the nerves up,” reduce muscle cramping and spasm and inhibits pain signal. At the most basic level, it blocks pain and awakens the nerves to bring back normal feeling. This is very different than basic TENS or electrical stimulation units used at home or in a physical therapy or chiropractic clinic for musculoskeletal pain conditions. These other machines produce stimulation from 1-150 pulses per second. NeuroMed electroanalgesia produces up to 10,000 pulses per second. We are the only clinic in this area to offer this advanced form of electrical stimulation.
- **Chiropractic adjustments and custom orthotics** may be helpful in some neuropathy cases. We use a specific type of distraction manipulation called Cox technique. This type of adjustment helps to gently stretch the spacing between the vertebrae in the lower back to reduce pressure on pinched nerves. Many patients with foot pain benefit greatly from custom orthotics from Foot Levelers. These gently correct arch collapse which in turn reduces pressure on pinched nerves in the feet.
- **Targeted supplementation** containing ingredients that have been proven to help heal nerves in neuropathy patients are prescribed. We use a supplement called **Nerve Renew** which contains the most powerful and clinically proven forms of B vitamins, Stabilized R Alpha Lipoic Acid, anti-oxidants and herbal extracts. All the ingredients have been clinically proven to reduce neuropathy pain and discomfort.



Neuro Med Inc. NeuroSanos Unit

KEY THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Again, there is no one magic bullet cure for treating neuropathy. It takes a comprehensive approach to find and address the cause then correct or at least improve the damage that has occurred.

Neuropathy is a progressive condition. Unless you do something, it will continue to get worse.

Red Rock Chiropractic Center is the only clinic in southwest Minnesota to offer a comprehensive peripheral neuropathy program.

CAN YOU BE HELPED?

A thorough review of your condition and overall health history and a thorough examination is the only way to determine how far your neuropathy has progressed and if it can be helped. **We will be honest with you.** If your condition is too severe, has been present for too long, or if you are unwilling to make changes and follow the program then we will tell you we cannot help. On the other hand, if your history and exam shows us a treatable condition and you are willing to make some changes and follow the program, then we will let you know that we likely can help. Clinics around the country with similar programs to ours report a 70-90% success in improving neuropathy symptoms. **Our goal is to reduce your symptoms by a minimum of 50% or more.**

In some severe cases, 50% improvement is a huge success in quality of living, and many patients will see more improvement than that. Total and complete healing is not always attainable, but we have seen several cases achieve well over 50% symptom relief.

ARE YOU READY?

Your options now are to do nothing, continue to do whatever it is you've been doing, or to try this research-backed, comprehensive program. Chances are if you're reading this report, you are looking for more answers and other options, and it may be safe to assume what you are currently doing is not working. Remember, peripheral neuropathy is a progressive disease and without proper treatment will continue to worsen over time. **Call us at 507-752-7650 to schedule your first appointment.** Our staff will guide you through the paperwork process and can answer any additional questions you may have about the program.

YOUR FIRST VISIT

We will review your neuropathy symptom and overall health history and perform a thorough examination to determine if you are a good candidate for our program. If you are a good candidate, we will review your specific program details and set up a schedule. Again, if after reviewing your history and exam we feel you are not a good candidate, we will be honest with you about why and will do our best to guide you in the right direction.

ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS

- How has this condition affected your work, family, relationships, recreational activities and finances?
- How much sleep has this condition robbed from you?
- How does this lack of sleep affect the rest of your health?
- What is it worth to you if your condition could be improved?
- How will your condition be in 5 years if you don't take care of it now?
- Are you willing to make some changes?

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

I have invested a tremendous amount of time, training and expense to bring this program to our area. We are the only clinic in southwest Minnesota with the training, equipment and experience to take on the complex challenge of peripheral neuropathy. Read more about our innovative program at redrockchiro.com/neuropathy. We look forward to helping you to achieve better health.

CONTACT US

Phone: 507-752-7650

E-mail: redrockchiro@hotmail.com

Website: www.redrockchiro.com



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Red Rock Chiropractic Center

Neuropathy Treatment Protocol

Peripheral neuropathy is a common condition caused by diabetes, nutrient deficiencies, heavy metal toxicity or other unknown issues. Symptoms include pain, tingling, burning and numbness, usually in the feet and sometimes hands. As the condition progresses, it can spread up the legs into the calf or even thighs. It is a challenging condition, but can be helped with the right approach. The longer the condition has been present the more challenging it is and longer it will take to achieve improvement. Dr. Kyle has spent a great deal of time studying neuropathy to find a protocol that will work for most patients. Medical doctors have only a couple of medication options to treat neuropathy symptoms, but the meds do nothing to actually heal or fix the problem.

The best treatment available today is laser or light therapy. Research shows this treatment stimulates healing in damaged nerves, encourages improved circulation, and reduces pain and inflammation. The procedure is totally painless and has no side effects. The recommended treatment plan is 24 sessions over a three-month period. A typical laser session will last about 20-30 minutes and may be accompanied by 10 minutes of a stimulating foot massager to bring about blood flow before the laser is applied.

Another therapy showing great promise is electroanalgesia. This advanced therapy uses electrical stimulation to simultaneously block pain signals and stimulate healing in nerves. A typical treatment session lasts about 20-30 minutes and is performed the same day as the laser treatments. Electroanalgesia is different from a TENS unit or other electric stimulation devices used in chiropractic or physical therapy clinics in that it can produce up to 10,000 pulses per second of Hertz vs. only 1-150 pulses per second. Electroanalgesia has the ability to produce a more profound pain relief and stimulated healing effect for nerves.

There is one key nutritional supplement that has been shown in studies to help heal damaged nerves. This is an essential part of your neuropathy program to help to heal the nerves from within and increase blood flow to the nerves. You will take this supplement for a minimum of 3 months during your program and may wish to continue taking them after to maintain your progress.

- Nerve Renew contains the most powerful and clinically proven forms of B vitamins, Stabilized R Alpha Lipoic Acid, anti-oxidants and herbal extracts. All the ingredients have been clinically proven to reduce neuropathy pain and discomfort.

Most of our neuropathy patients have foot pain which can be caused by the local nerves of the foot being pinched because of fallen arches. For this reason our neuropathy program patients are prescribed custom orthotics from Foot Levelers. These can help alleviate foot pain by properly supporting the arches and decreasing pressure on the nerves of the feet. We also prescribe an at-home tool called a FootWheel to release tight and tender points in the arches.

Finally, some patients may need chiropractic adjustments to assess the lower back, which is where the nerves that run down your legs start. If it is determined during your examination that misalignments in your lower back may be contributing to your neuropathy, chiropractic adjustments will be added to your program. We use one of the best researched chiropractic adjustment methods called Cox technique which is gentle and effective in reducing pressure on the nerves in your lower back.

This combination of laser or light therapy, electroanalgesia, chiropractic adjustments, foot massage, proper supplements, Foot Levelers orthotics and a FootWheel tool can be expected to reduce neuropathy symptoms by 50% or more in three months or less in 90% of patients. This is a scientifically sound treatment program. It will take some time, patience, persistence and out-of-pocket expense, but this is a promising approach to achieve your desired relief. Red Rock Chiropractic Center is the only clinic in the area to offer such a comprehensive approach.

Neuropathy Treatment Frequently Asked Questions

1. How many treatments will it take? The neuropathy treatment protocol calls for 24 sessions over three months. Three sessions per week for the first month; two sessions per week for the second month; one session per week for the third month.

2. How long before I start to feel better? Most patients will start to feel some improvement within the first month of treatment. Optimal results will take closer to the prescribed three-month window, and sometimes longer depending on the severity of your condition. Remember, the delicate healing of damaged nerves is gradual, not instant.

3. How much will treatment cost? Laser therapy is \$75 per session (x24). Electroanalgesia is \$25 per session (x24). Neuropathy protocol patients are also prescribed Foot Levelers custom orthotics (\$275), a Foot Wheel (\$25), and nutritional supplements (\$55 per month). Chiropractic adjustments are about \$37 per session, depending on insurance coverage (x24). In total, the program will cost around \$3,500 out-of-pocket over three months.

4. Does my insurance cover any of this? Chiropractic adjustments may be a covered service through your insurance, but all other aspects of the program are not covered and will not be billed to insurance. Please keep in mind our program costs about half as much as clinics in the Twin Cities with similar neuropathy treatment protocols.

5. Are there different payment options? Yes. We have a variety of flexible payment options including monthly and weekly as well as through Care Credit. Our staff will review an individualized program plan and help you decide which payment method is best.

6. Is treatment guaranteed to work? Nothing in healthcare can be 100% guaranteed. However, this program is scientifically sound and has been used throughout the country with an 85-90% success rate.

7. Are there any side effects? In short, side effects are highly unlikely. We carefully screen laser patients to be sure there are no contraindications. We have used laser therapy in our office for several years and have had no reported side effects. Some of the nutritional supplements can cause digestive upset, so dosages may need to be modified; though again this occurs very rarely. People do not die from nutritional supplements, but well over 100,000 die each year from prescription drugs. Some patients experience mild discomfort or soreness in the arches of the feet when getting used to wearing the custom orthotics, but this typically only lasts a week or two. Electroanalgesia can produce burns if used at the incorrect settings, but our staff has been trained to use the machine properly to minimize this risk. This would be a rare and certainly not life-threatening side effect.

8. How long will each treatment session take? You will be in the office for about 60-75 minutes each session.

9. Can I just try a few treatments to see if it helps? Honestly, it is a bit pointless to do only a few sessions. The program protocol was carefully and specifically designed to give you the best chance for symptom relief. As stated above, the delicate healing of damaged nerves is gradual, not instant. Doing only a few sessions is not going to be a good use of your money because only a few sessions simply will not give you the relief you desire. Most patients will start to feel some improvement within the first month of treatment. Optimal results will take closer to the prescribed three-month window, and sometimes longer depending on the severity of your condition. Following the program as recommended is the best way to proceed.