

OptimalHealthSecrets.Com
LIA Lifestyle Instruction Aid

aa5 Dr. John Sarno's Theory of Back Pain

Dr. Victor Jean Ouellette June 1999

Modified March 6, 2008

Dr. Sarno, an MD, has a theory on back pain. He believes that repressed rage is the cause of most back pain. According to him, your unconscious mind gives you this back pain deliberately to distract you from acting on, or being destroyed by, rage.

Sorry, but I have never been a fan of theories that the unconscious mind, in normal people, deliberately messes up the body. Rather, I believe that the body will gravitate to healing itself rather than causing pain to itself. The body inherently seeks homeostasis, a natural 'ground' state of good health.

It is more likely that Dr. Sarno has not given due consideration to the role of nutrition and intestinal action on the lower back. Intestinal problems can REFER pain to the lower back. It is well known that emotional stress can affect the intestines in several ways. One way this emotional stress can affect the intestines, is that it speeds up the movement of food and thus, predisposes the bowels to a loose stool, because the large intestine does not have time to do its job of absorbing the remainder of the water. These loose stool can create problems in several ways. If the intestines get backed up by a plug of constipation, or even a normal consistent stool, then voila, pain and referred pain.

Loose stools can also cause what might be termed 'Urgency'. This is the strong need to have a bowel movement. It can be strong enough to cause pain and referred pain to the lower back. So reducing someone's emotional state, by ANY means may very well give some relief. However, don't be fooled. If you have some MECHANICAL lower back problem, which most of us do, then you have a double whammy. If you were to go to a 'witch doctor who shakes a rattle at you and, if you 'BELIEVE' then you are cured, or so to speak. But the underlying mechanical problem remains and it will cause problems sooner or later.

This intestinal link is much more plausible than some unconscious theory. But, Dr. Sarno's idea of reducing this rage is very good and very important but, for other reasons as in lowering blood pressure and taking strain off blood vessels. You see, even he, has made this association between Rest & Relaxation and Attitude (the mental states) and how are body works. That's good work on his part. Of course, good research will help clarify this for us.

Eating foods that may act like poisons to your system, and having mechanical low back problems like 'subluxations', are much more plausible reasons for low back pain than some theory of unconscious damage.

Copyright 1999, Dr. Victor Jean Ouellette, All Rights Reserved