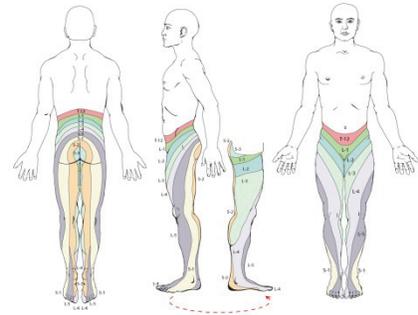


Lumbar Dermatomes: Disc Pathology

Lumbar Dermatomes

- In this example, nerve root pain is due to disc pathology.
- Dermatomes are regions of altered sensation from irritated or damaged nerve roots.
- Symptoms that follow a dermatome (numbness, tingling or pain) may indicate a pathology that involves the related nerve root. These symptoms can follow the entire dermatome or just part of it.
- When symptoms cover more than one dermatome it may suggest more severe pathology and involvement of more than one nerve root.



Disc Pathology: Lumbar Disc Pathology has various presentations.

1. Normal Disc
 2. Internal Disc Disorder: Small tear at the inner part of the outer third of the disc where the annulus is innervated.
 3. Outer Disc Disorder: Larger tear that extends to the outer part of the annulus. Discography is a good way to diagnose the morphology of the disc and establish the disc as a pain generator.
 4. Protrusion: Small disc bulge and the outer layers of the annulus are intact
 5. Prolapse: Large disc bulge that breaks through the layers of the annulus but not the posterior longitudinal ligament (PLL).
 6. Extrusion: Large disc bulge that breaks through the layers of the annulus and the PLL. This often causes pain in a multitude of dermatomes.
 7. Sequestration (not shown; rare): Disc fragment breaks away from the rest of the discs.
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