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Autumn is a second spring
when every leaf is a flower.
~Albert Camus

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WADDELL'S TEST

Indications: Low back pain evaluation

This test can be done on all spine evaluations.

Criteria¹:

- [1] *Superficial non-anatomic tenderness*
- [2] *Overreaction*
- [3] *Pain on simulated maneuvers...*

Meaning...

- 1) Pain on axial loading of the skull [pressing down on top of head]
- 2) Pain on passive rotation of shoulders & pelvis
- [4] *Straight Leg Raise testing discrepancy....*

Meaning.....

- 1) Sitting exam & supine exam are not consistent [results should be the same whether sitting or lying down]
- 2) Sitting test performed while distracting patient
- [5] *Non physiologic examination...*

Meaning.....

- 1) Non-dermatomal sensory loss [meaning sensory loss does not follow a known nerve pathway]
- 2) Cogwheel or give-way weakness

INTERPRETATION:

-It is a *Positive Waddell's Test* if *three* or more *criteria¹* are positive. [There are *five* total *criteria* listed above in *italics*]
-*Positive test implies psychogenic back pain.*

[*Family Practice notebook.com*]

What is a Straight Leg Raise test?

- I. Technique / performed in two positions:
 - a) *Supine low back exam*
 - b) *Sitting low back exam*
 - c) *Flex hip from 180 to 90 degrees [meaning bend forward].*
- II. Criteria for positive test:
 - a) *Sciatic Pain before 70 degrees*
 - b) *Aggravation of pain dorsiflexion of the foot [meaning pulling your foot up toward the shin]*
 - c) *Relief of pain by knee flexion [meaning bending your knee & lower leg backwards]*

INTERPRETATIONS.....

What the patient experiences with this test.

A. Radiating pain into the legs

- 1) *Suggests radiculopathy¹*
- 2) *Higher likelihood that pain radiating into legs suggests radiculopathy if:*
 - a) *excruciating sciatic-like pain occurs*
 - b) *pain occurs at 30 to 40 degrees of leg elevation [sitting or lying down]*

B. Crossed pain into opposite leg:

- 1) *Indicates severe impingement*
- 2) *Almost always due to a large disk herniation.*

¹ *Radiculopathy*: not a specific condition, rather a description of a problem in which one or more nerves are affected and do not work properly [neuropathy]. Emphasis is on the nerve root resulting in radicular or referred pain.

[*Family Practice notebook.com*]

MRI....magnetic resonance imaging....is a noninvasive way to take pictures of the body. Unlike x-rays and computed tomographic [CAT] scans, which use radiation, MRI uses powerful magnets and radio waves. The MRI scanner contains the magnet. The magnetic field produced by an MRI is about 10 thousand times greater than the earth's.

The magnetic field forces hydrogen atoms in the body to line up in a certain way (similar to how the needle on a compass moves when you hold it near a magnet). When radio waves are sent toward the lined-up hydrogen atoms, they bounce back, and a computer records the signal. Different types of tissues send back different signals.