

SPINE SURGERY AND CARE FOR LONG ISLAND AND BEYOND

FROM SOUTH ISLAND ORTHOPEDICS



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Common Spine Symptoms

The spine is made up of five regions—the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spine, the sacrum, and the coccyx. It contains 33 bones at birth, but they fuse together throughout childhood, leaving adults with 24 vertebrae. When something goes wrong with this part of the musculoskeletal system, it can cause significant symptoms and disability.

You might be tempted to see your general practitioner for back issues, but their ability to help you is limited. The specialists at South Island Orthopedic are board-certified surgeons and licensed therapists. They can provide you with the most thorough evaluation, accurate diagnosis, and range of treatments for spinal symptoms.

If you have any of these symptoms, consider contacting orthopedic spine surgeons rather than going to your regular doctor:

- Neck or back pain that radiates into the arms or legs
- Weakness, numbness, or a tingling sensation in the back, neck, arms, or legs
- Poor bladder or bowel control along with other spine symptoms
- Difficulty moving your neck or back
- Significantly limited mobility due to pain or stiffness

Child spine problems often cause similar symptoms as those seen in adults. They

can also have symptoms associated with malformations in the spine, like scoliosis. Look for these signs that your child needs to see a pediatric spine specialist:

- Uneven shoulders
- Uneven hips and waist
- One shoulder blade is more prominent than the other
- A hunched back
- Back pain
- Difficulty breathing

Common Spine Issues and Conditions

When you see an orthopedic spine specialist, they will go over your symptoms and perform exams and any other tests they need to diagnose your condition. These are some of the most common issues that cause spinal pain and similar symptoms:

- **Herniated Cervical Disc.** A herniated disc occurs when the cushioning discs between vertebrae slip out of position and the material inside them pushes outward. When a cervical disc herniates, it can cause neck pain along with weakness, tingling, and numbness in the shoulder and down the arm.
- **Herniated Lumbar Disc.** More common is a herniated lumbar disc in the lower part of the spine. This causes low back pain, as well as numbness, tingling, and weakness in the legs and potentially in the feet. Rarely, this can cause loss of bladder or bowel control. It can also cause sciatica.
- **Sciatica.** Sciatica is pain that starts in the lower back and runs down the leg. Symptoms may also include numbness and weakness. The cause is compression or damage to the sciatic nerve that runs from the lower spine down to the feet.
- **Spinal Osteoarthritis.** Osteoarthritis is the normal wear and tear on joint tissue that causes inflammation, pain, and stiffness. Arthritis in the spine can also cause limited mobility and weakness, numbness, or tingling in the arms and legs.
- **Spinal Stenosis.** Stenosis occurs when the spaces in the spine narrow, putting pressure on nerves. Osteoarthritis is the main cause. Symptoms include neck or back pain, numbness or tingling in the hand, arm, foot, or leg, weakness, and rarely bladder or bowel dysfunction.
- **Spinal Deformities.** Spinal deformities include scoliosis, lordosis, and kyphosis. They cause a curved spine, a severe inward curve in the lower spine, or a hump in the upper back. Any of these can cause pain or difficulty walking, or they might cause no symptoms.
- **Whiplash.** Many people wonder, can whiplash cause lower back pain? The answer is yes. Even though it occurs in the neck, whiplash can cause both neck and lower back pain as well as stiffness, headaches, fatigue, and dizziness.

Degenerative diseases in the spine are of particular concern for aging patients. The risk of developing osteoarthritis, a slipped disk, and stenosis increases with age. Natural wear and tear on the cushioning discs cause vertebrae to rub together and lead to some of these conditions.

Although spinal problems are more common in adults, children can have spine issues too. Some children are born with scoliosis, a curvature of the spine, or kyphosis, which is a rounding of the upper back.

During growth spurts, children are susceptible to spondylolysis, a stress fracture. Spondylolysis can progress to spondylolisthesis, a slipped vertebra. This occurs when one vertebra shifts forward. Both conditions can cause pain that radiates into the legs and restrict mobility.

Spinal Injuries

Some spinal problems result from injuries and accidents and can cause a sudden onset of symptoms. Common causes of spine injuries include car accidents, falls, physical assaults, and sports injuries. Workplace accidents involving falls or dropped objects can damage the spine.

Children and adolescents are particularly at risk for sports-related injuries, a potential cause of spondylolysis. They are also often victims of car accidents and abuse and violence that might cause a spinal injury.

Signs that someone needs urgent or emergency spinal care after an accident or injury include:

- Sudden and extreme pain in the head, neck, or back
- Loss of sensation in the limbs
- Loss of control over part of the body
- Bowel or bladder incontinence
- Lumps on the spine or head
- Difficulty breathing

Call 911 and try to keep the victim immobile until help arrives. Take advantage of urgent care if the symptoms are not that severe but still concerning. The SI Ortho practice locations are staffed by qualified physicians who can diagnose the problem and determine what treatment is needed.





Spinal Treatments and Surgeries

When you consult with the spine specialists at SI Ortho, they will evaluate you fully, make an accurate diagnosis, and discuss your treatment options. If possible for your condition, they will first treat you with non-surgical interventions, like pain management and physical therapy.

Physical Therapy

Physical therapists use stretches, exercises, massage, heat and cold therapy, and equipment to help patients relieve pain and restore mobility and function. Types of [physical therapy](#) include:

- Neurological
- Cardiopulmonary
- Orthopedic
- Pediatric
- Geriatric
- Sports
- Clinical electrophysiology

SI Ortho physical therapists work with physicians to provide spinal patients with the appropriate supportive therapies.

Spinal Surgeries

If non-surgical treatments prove to be inadequate to fix your spinal condition or alleviate symptoms, you could benefit from [surgery](#):

- **Laminectomy.** SI Ortho surgeons perform this procedure for spinal stenosis. Removing some of the bone or bone spurs widens the spinal canal and relieves pressure on nerves.
- **Discectomy.** This procedure treats herniated and slipped discs. The surgeon removes some or all of the disc to relieve pain.

- **Spinal Fusion.** Sometimes, a slipped disc requires more extensive treatment. A surgeon might follow up a discectomy with a spinal fusion, in which they fuse together two vertebrae after removing the disc between them.
- **Foraminotomy.** Surgeons can relieve pressure on nerves and resulting pain by removing some of the bone tissue on the side of a vertebra. Patients often need a spinal fusion with this procedure to ensure stability in the spine.
- **Disc Replacement.** Another option for treating a herniated or slipped disc is to remove it and replace it with a synthetic component. This is an alternative to spinal fusion. Surgeons may use an interlaminar implant, a U-shaped cushion between vertebrae.
- **Facetectomy.** A facetectomy removes some of the four facets, or protrusions, on a vertebra. This helps relieve pressure on nerves and improves mobility.

Scoliosis correction is one of the most common spinal procedures for children. When considering scoliosis treatment in New York, you want a pediatric specialist, like those available at SI Ortho. Children are still growing, so performing spinal surgery is not as simple as for adults.

SI Ortho specialists consider each child's needs carefully before determining when and how to correct scoliosis surgically. They might use anchoring rods to correct the spine's shape as it grows. Alternatively, they can perform a spinal fusion to correct the curvature.



Meet Dr. Lee, One of the Best Spine Surgeons on Long Island



Dr. Franklin Lee, DO
Spine Specialist

When it comes to minimally invasive spine surgery, New York is a good place to be. But you might also be wondering, is robotic spine surgery available near me? You can find spine specialists throughout the area, like Dr. Franklin Lee, who have extensive experience providing high-tech robotic procedures.

Dr. Lee joined the SI Ortho team in Long Island in August 2021. He began his career in medicine by earning a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) degree from the Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra University. He completed a spine surgery fellowship at the MedStar Health/Union Memorial Hospital and the University of Maryland/St. Joseph Medical Center.

As a specialist in both orthopedics and spine surgery, Dr. Lee is uniquely qualified to diagnose, manage, and treat all kinds of spinal conditions and injuries. His training and years of experience working as a surgeon mean that Dr. Lee is an expert in minimally invasive procedures, robotically assisted surgery, and complex spinal cases.

Dr. Lee understands that back surgery can be scary for patients. He exhausts all non-surgical

treatment options before turning to surgery as a solution to spinal problems. When surgery is necessary, Dr. Lee relies on the least invasive procedure possible to improve patient recovery times and outcomes. Some of the conditions Dr. Lee is qualified to treat include:

- Back pain
- Spinal stenosis
- Spinal infections
- Herniated discs
- Scoliosis
- Spondylolisthesis
- Sciatica
- Kyphosis
- Pinched nerves
- Spinal fractures
- Spinal tumors

As an osteopathic doctor, Dr. Lee takes a holistic approach to care. He considers the entire body and all of its systems before developing treatment plans. His orthopedic approach is a valuable addition to the already expert team at SI Ortho.

To get in touch with Dr. Lee, or any of the other SI Ortho orthopedic and spine specialists in Long Island, [request an appointment](#).

Meet Dr. Godfried, Pediatric Spine Specialist



Dr. David H. Godfried, MD
Pediatric Spine Specialist

We are also thrilled to have renowned pediatric orthopedic specialist Dr. David Godfried. Dr. Godfried led pediatric departments as a Director at NYU and Northwell Health System and has been practicing for more than 20 years. Dr. Godfried now leads our pediatric orthopedic division, helping most of our young patients with back pain and injuries.

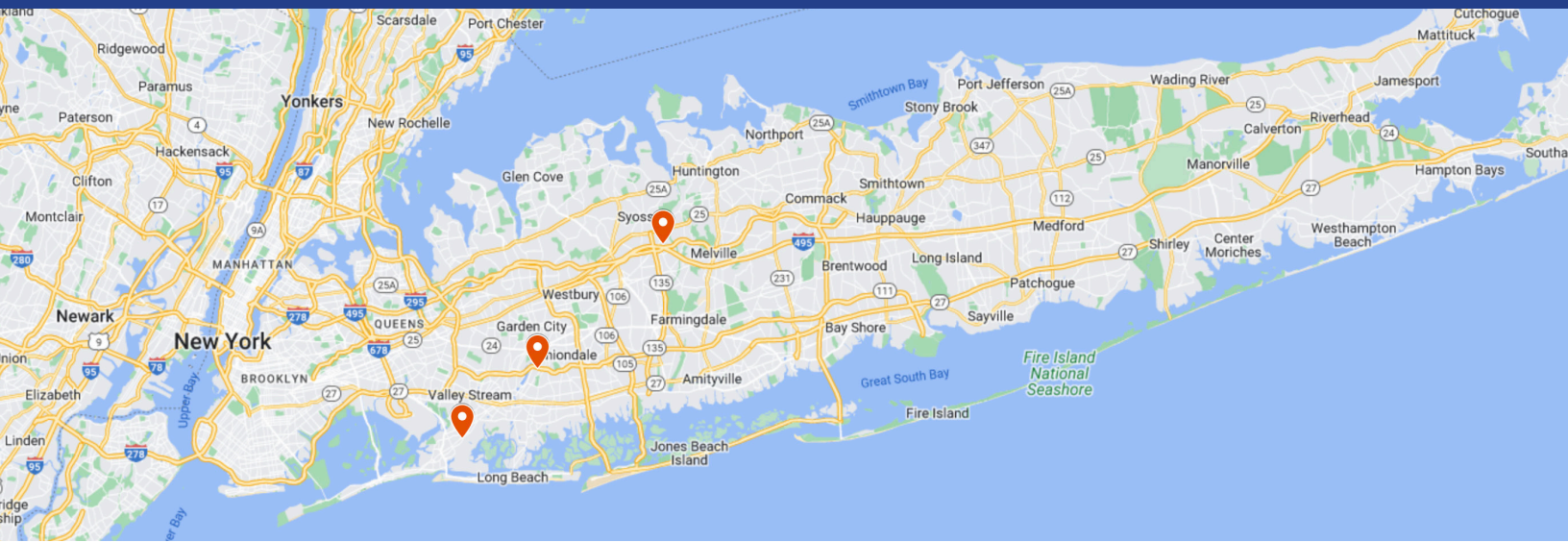
Dr. Godfried graduated from the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons Medical School. He completed a residency at the University of Minnesota Shriners Hospital for Children and a fellowship at the Children's Memorial Medical Center at Northwestern University.

With extensive training in children's hospitals, Dr. Godfried is perfectly placed to take care of our youngest patients. After completing his residency and fellowships, he continued to work with children as the Director of the Center for Children and Ignacio Ponseti Clubfoot Center at NYU Langone. He has also served as Chief of the Pediatric Orthopaedic Division at Northwell Health's Children's Hospital and taught orthopedic surgery at Northwestern.

Dr. Godfried is committed to providing the best orthopedic and spine care for children and adolescents in a family- and kid-friendly environment.

To get in touch with Dr. Godfried, or any of the other SI Ortho orthopedic and spine specialists in Long Island, [request an appointment.](#)





Our Locations

South Island Orthopedics is committed to being there when you need us the most.

Woodbury Location

205 Froehlich Farm Boulevard
Woodbury, NY 11797
Phone: 516-364-0070 Fax: 516-364-0242

[Visit Woodbury](#)

Cedarhurst Location

657 Central Avenue
Cedarhurst, NY 11516
Phone: 516-295-0111 Fax: 516-295-9438

[Visit Cedarhurst](#)

Rockville Centre Location

2000 N Village Avenue, Suite 311
Rockville Centre, NY 11570
Phone: 516-665-9200 Fax: 516-442-5720

[Visit Rockville Centre](#)

Make an Appointment Today!

If you have questions about an injury, treatment options, or you need to see an orthopedic specialist, reach out to South Island Orthopedics today. You can also [request an appointment](#) by calling one of our offices or visiting us online at www.SIOrtho.com.