

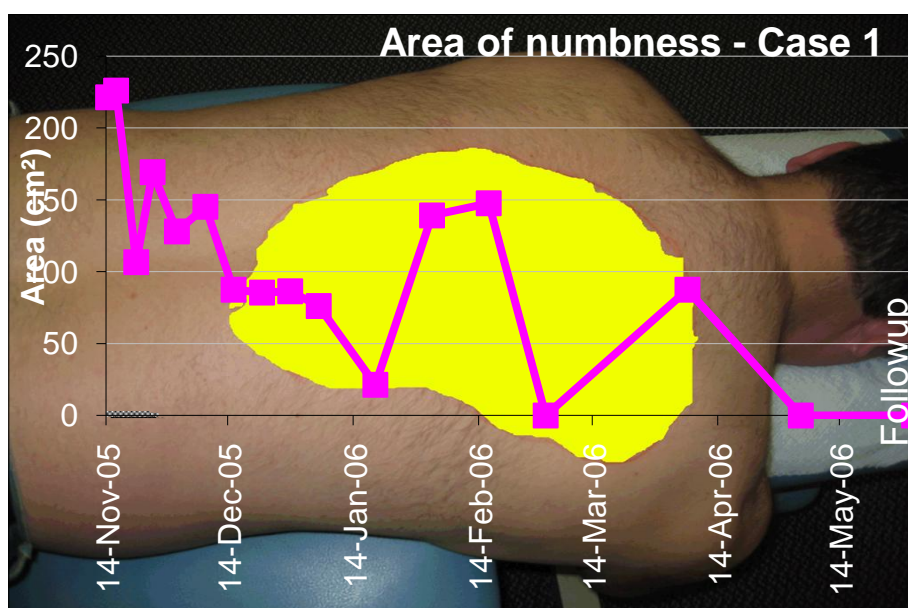
Numbness around the spine

Dr Bryner presented recent clinical research on numbness to the Chiropractors and Osteopathic College of Australasia College Annual Conference in Melbourne.

Over the last six years he followed three patients who came to the clinic with an unusual symptom. Most patients seek care for pain, but these individuals came in complaining of a patch of numbness just to the side of their spine. Each

of them said "I came here because chiropractors deal with the spine".

In all three cases the numbness disappeared with treatment and further monitoring has shown that it stayed away for up to 2 years after treatment was stopped.



Numbness usually means that there is nerve compression and can be caused by disc protrusion that results in numbness in the arms or legs. These problems are commonly treated by chiropractors. Other nerve problems show patches of numbness associated with nerve being pressed on elsewhere like in the ankle, wrist or hip. Of note is that symptoms are limited to the distribution of the nerve.

Numbness around the spine indicates compression of the very small nerves that travel through the spinal muscles to innervate the skin in small patches down either side of the spine. Interestingly there is very little research in this area and no other reports of numbness have documented such changes as Dr Bryner has described.

Dr Bryner has conducted a review of the medical literature and found over 130 cases of a related condition called "Notalgia Paresthetica". This condition is thought to involve pressure on this nerve but it is treated by dermatologists as the itchy patch becomes discoloured and patients think they have a skin condition rather than a spinal condition.

