

Sinister causes of back pain

How not to miss them

WEBINAR FOR GPs – 11 May 2022
8am – 8.30am



Dr Ralph Stanford

ORTHOPAEDIC SPINE SURGEON

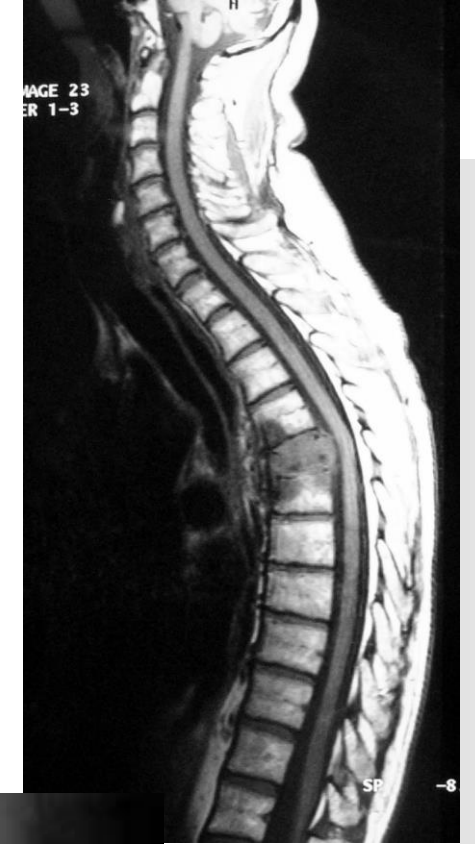


- Spinal surgeon with over 20 years' experience.
- Dedicated to lifelong learning and sharing my expertise with others, I attend spinal conferences worldwide and regularly consult with colleagues about successful treatments.
- Conjoint Senior Lecturer at the University of New South Wales; Supervisor of Training for Orthopaedic Trainees, Prince of Wales Hospital; and Education Secretary for the Spine Society of Australia.
- Honorary Senior Scientist at Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA).

If you have any questions about a patient, please feel free to call me on 02 9650 4893.
I will return your call and discuss how we can help.

Introduction

- Infection
- Inflammatory
 - Ankylosing spondylitis
- Tumour
- Fracture
- 1/1000 in primary care



Pattern of pain

	Non specific pain	Tumour and Infection	Inflammatory	Fracture
	Comes and goes	Relentless	Characteristic diurnal pattern	Osteoporosis, low energy injury
Duration	Weeks to years	Weeks to few months	Weeks to months	Days
Temporal pattern	Fluctuating, relapsing	Steadily progressive	Early morning stiffness	Sudden onset
Relieving factors	Rest, specific activities	Often none	NSAIDs	Recumbency

Red flags

- Traditional
- Not discriminatory in practice
- Poor performance in objective studies



What is important



- Past history of infection or malignancy
- Risk factors for osteoporosis

Strategies

- Recognise relapsing non-specific pain
- If unsure, review in few weeks

Simple things
first

Infection	Tumour	Ankylosing spondylitis	Fracture in osteoporosis
CRP	MRI/CT	X-ray SIJ	X-ray
X-ray not sensitive early on	Only on good suspicion	CRP of no value	Often negative in first 2 weeks

Scans

- Make sure that the painful part is imaged
- Unwarranted scans in those with non-specific pain can entrench chronic pain behaviours



Conclusion



- A subtle art
- Patient review is a powerful tool

Q & A

- A **recording** of the webinar will be available on my website
- See also my **article** online: Sinister Causes of Back Pain
- **Further resources for GPs** are available at <https://spinalsurgeonsydney.com.au/for-referrers>
- **To receive future resources via email** send your name and email address to info@powspine.com.au



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You can also reach me via ralphstanford@powspine.com.au.