

# NOTALGIA PARESTHETICA

## YOU HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH NOTALGIA PARESTHETICA



### WHAT IS IT?

Notalgia paresthetica is a condition where itch and/or changed sensation arise in the areas of skin on the medial aspect of the shoulder blade on either side of the back. Notalgia means pain in the back, and paresthetica refers to burning pain, tingling or itch. It is also called thoracic cutaneous nerve entrapment syndrome.

### HOW DID I GET IT?

The nerves which supply sensation to the upper back emerge from the spinal cord (2nd to 6th thoracic segments) and run a long course up through the thick muscles of the back. They make a right-angled turn before reaching the skin. The nerves appear to be vulnerable to compression or traction. Partial compression or injury leads to the symptoms.

Initial injury to the nerves may include: back injury, herniated or "slipped" disc, shingles, sunburn, myelopathy, or small fiber neuropathy.

### TREATMENT

Buy Capsaicin at the pharmacy (it is available over the counter)

- Use this medication on the skin only. Follow all directions on the product package. If you are uncertain about any of the information, consult your doctor or pharmacist.
- For the cream, gel, and lotion forms, apply a thin layer of medication to the affected area and rub in gently and thoroughly. You may want to use a cotton ball/swab or latex glove to apply the medication to avoid touching the medication with your hands.
- Do not apply the medication in the eyes, mouth, nostrils, or genitals. If you do get the medication in those areas, flush with plenty of water. Also, do not apply this medication to skin that is injured or irritated (e.g., cut, scraped, sunburned).
- Do not apply this medication immediately before or after activities such as bathing, swimming, sun bathing, or heavy exercise. Do not bandage or wrap the affected area or use a heating pad on that area. Doing so may increase the risk of side effects.
- After applying the medication, wash your hands unless you are using this medication to treat the hands. If treating the hands, wait at least 30 minutes after applying the medication to wash your hands.
- Use this medication regularly to get the most benefit from it. To help you remember, use it at the same times each day.
- This medication may sometimes take up to 2 months to work. Tell your doctor if your condition persists for more than 7 days, if it worsens, or if it keeps returning. If you think you may have a serious medical problem, seek immediate medical attention.
- In severe cases, a pill called Neurontin or Gabapentin may be used.