

# A Brief Back Examination for GPs

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**Purpose:** To help to triage patients into:

1. Serious pathology or neurological deterioration.
2. Nerve root pain
3. Non-specific back pain



## Points to bear in mind:

1. Case history generally reveals more than examination does.
2. Main differentiations are:
  - Root pain
  - Progressive neurological deficit
  - Hip pathology
  - Vascular/abdominal pathology
  - Spinal pathology



## The Basic Components:

(2 minutes)

### Sitting

SLR  
↓  
Patrick-Fabere

### Standing

Structural deformity  
↓  
Antalgia  
↓  
Femoral nerve stretch



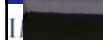
SLR

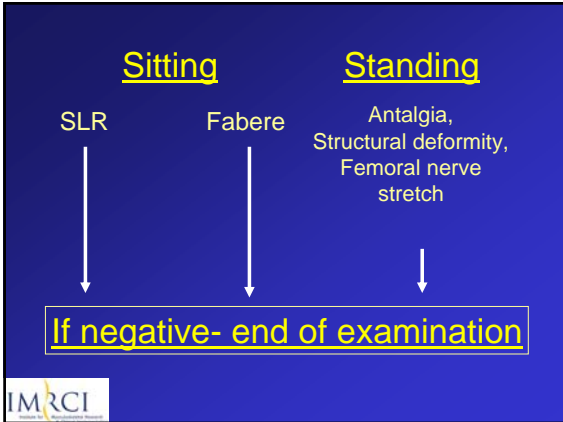
Fabere



Femoral nerve stretch

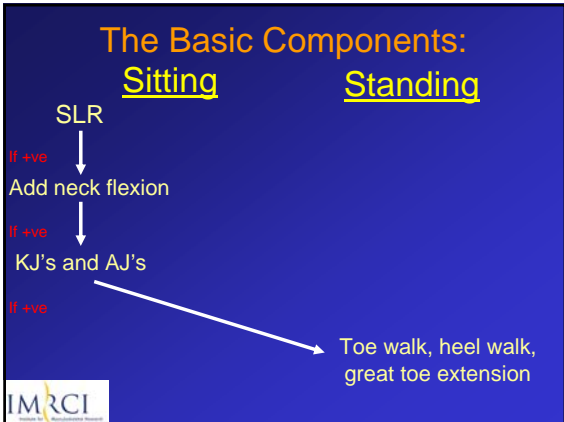
Antalgia,  
Structural  
Deformity



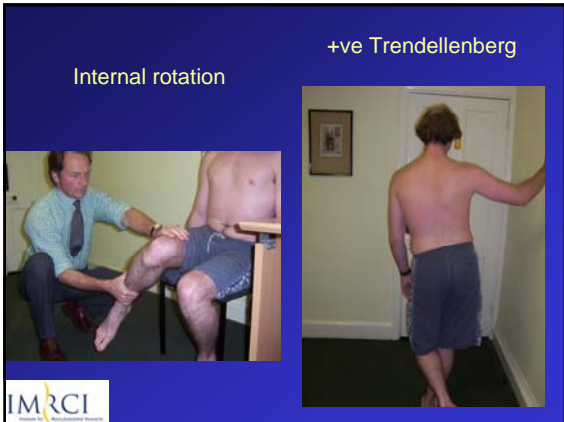
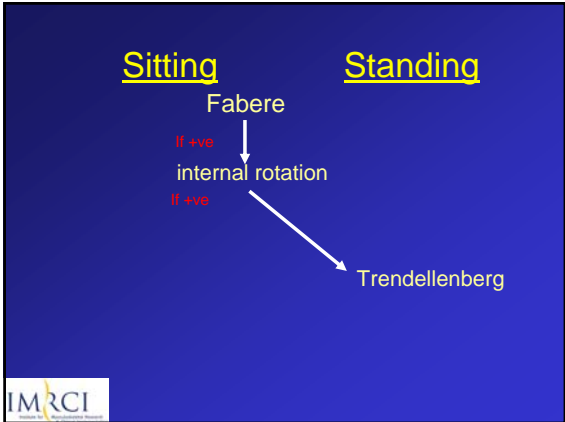


- Things to do if the history and brief exam suggests non-specific back pain
- Psychosocial assessment
  - Advice to stay active and at work
  - Adequate analgesia at regular intervals
  - Take time to explain and reassure (Back Book)
  - Consider referral for manipulation if not recovering

Root pain:



Hip disease:



Upper lumbar root pain:

