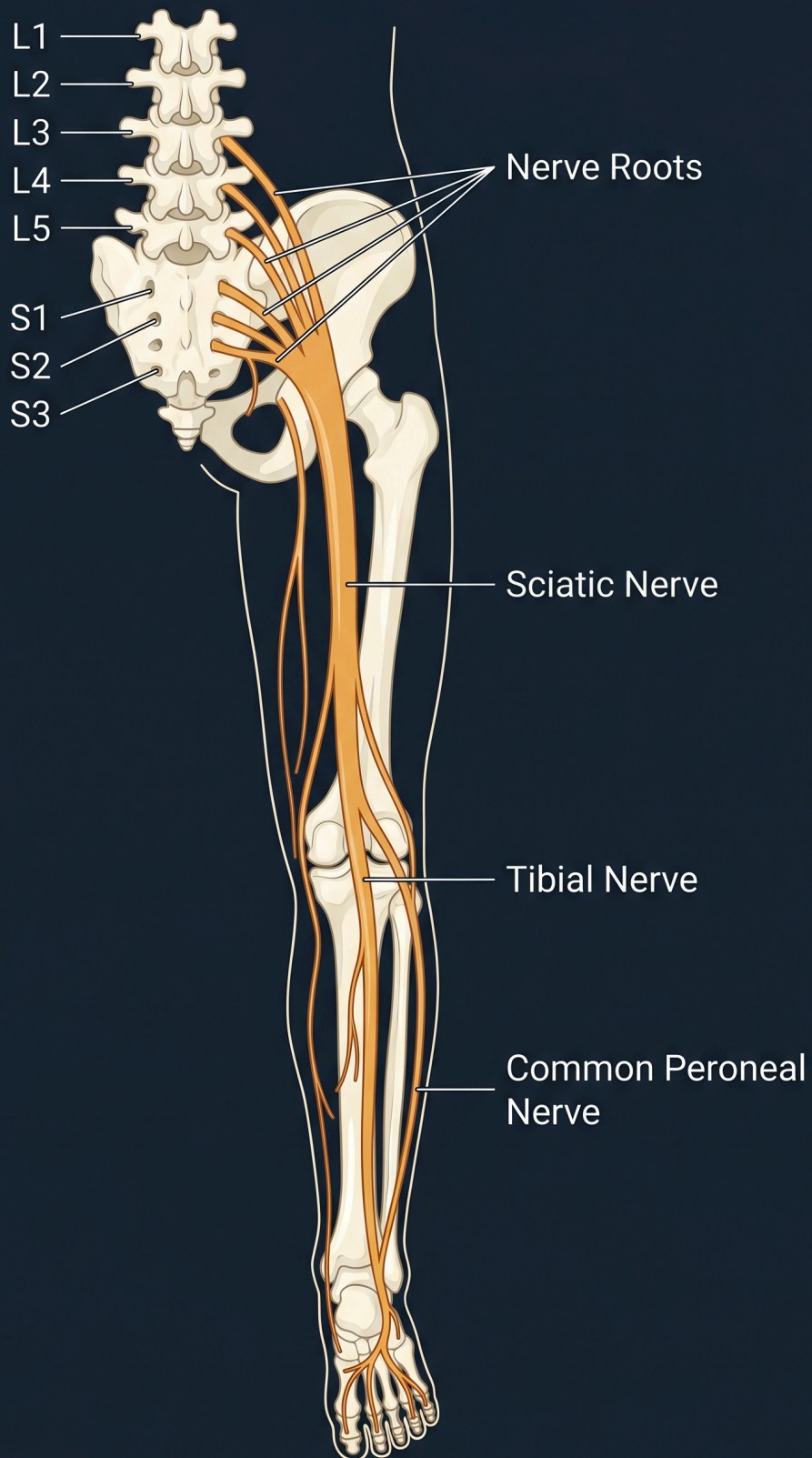




NERVE COACH MINA

Your Guide to Understanding and Healing Sciatica

BY MINA KAVIA

NERVECOACHMINA.COM

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CHAPTER 01

The Sciatica–Aging Connection

CHAPTER 01 · THE SCIATICA–AGING CONNECTION

Imagine your spine as a stack of flexible pillows holding everything steady. When those pillows (discs) get squished or worn, they irritate the nearby sciatic nerve, sending pain signals like an alarm. This triggers a chain reaction involving **neurogenic inflammation** and **neuromodulation** — your body's way of calming or amplifying nerve signals.

Pressure on the discs creates oxidative stress, damaging the mitochondria in your disc cells. Over time, this shortens telomeres, slows autophagy, and leads to senescence — cells that stop helping and start causing low-level chaos. The result: not just leg pain, but fatigue and a sense that your body is aging faster than it should.

"Addressing these changes early — through core strength and gut balance — can calm the fire, recharge your energy, and protect your vitality."

The **Transversus Abdominis (TrA)** — your deepest belly muscle — is your spine's main natural brace. When strong, it wraps around like a supportive hug. When weak, instability worsens neurogenic inflammation by overloading the fascia and its sensitive C-fiber pain receptors.



CHAPTER 02

Understanding Your Personal Risks

CHAPTER 02 · UNDERSTANDING YOUR PERSONAL RISKS

Everyone's sciatica story is unique, shaped by age (it often peaks in your 40s–50s), extra weight, too much sitting, past injuries, and genetics. Epigenetics — how lifestyle "dials" your genes up or down — plays a major role too.

HIGH-RISK SIGNS

Extra belly weight, chronic stress, blood sugar instability, and gut dysbiosis all signal faster disc wear. Weak core stability adds to fascia and nerve strain.

PROTECTIVE STEPS

Aim for a healthy BMI and move daily — proven to cut risks by 20–30%. Foods rich in folate (leafy greens) help reset gene dials for slower aging.

"Knowledge is power. Simple screenings spot risks early, letting us customize prevention and extend your pain-free, active years."



CHAPTER 03

Spotting Sciatica Early

CHAPTER 03 · SPOTTING SCIATICA EARLY

Early detection is your superpower. We use targeted tests to see what's happening under the surface — creating a plan that's 100% for you.

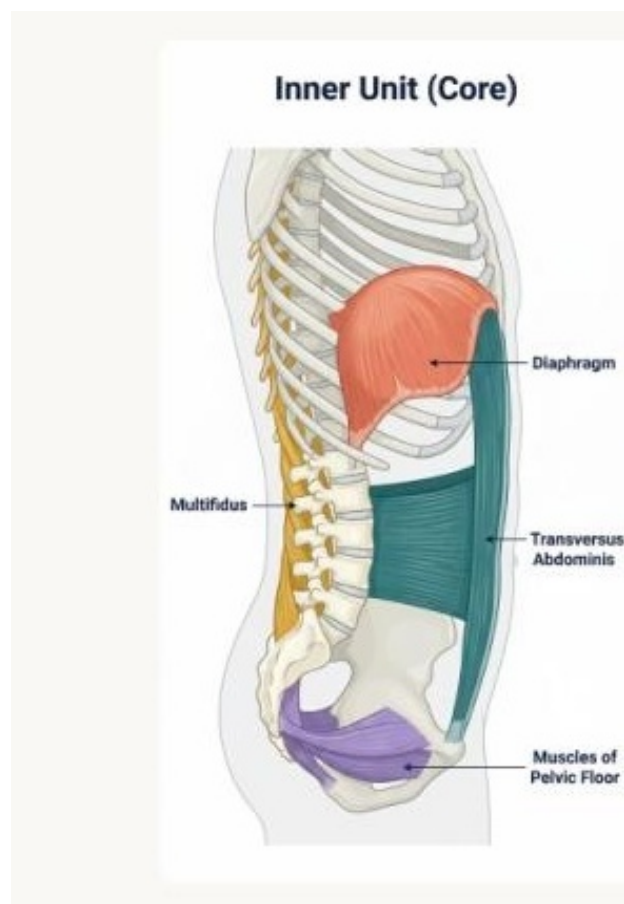
TEST	WHAT IT SHOWS	WHY IT MATTERS
Inflammation (hs-CRP)	Low-grade inflammation	High levels mean a hidden fire irritating nerves.
Vitamin D	Deficiency check	Low D is linked to more pain and weaker muscles.
Blood Sugar (HbA1c)	Average blood sugar	High sugar damages nerves and worsens inflammation.
Gut Health (Stool Test)	Gut bacteria balance	Unhealthy gut leaks toxins triggering inflammation.
Genetic Insights (MTHFR)	Nutrient processing	Personalizes supplement advice for better results.

Level 1 Retraining: Your Core System

1. TRA CORE ACTIVATION — THE INNER UNIT

The TrA is the front and side wall of your body's deep stabilising cylinder — the **Inner Unit**. It works together with the Diaphragm (roof), Multifidus (back wall), and Pelvic Floor (floor) to pressurise the abdominal cavity and protect the lumbar spine and sciatic nerve.

INNER UNIT (CORE)



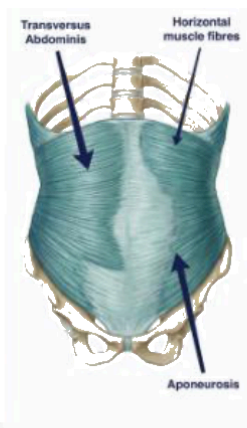
THE INNER UNIT

The TrA forms the front and side wall of a pressurised cylinder together with the **Diaphragm** (roof), **Multifidus** (back wall), and **Pelvic Floor** (floor). All four must activate together for full spinal protection.

When the TrA is weak or inhibited — as is common in chronic sciatica — the lumbar spine loses its internal brace. This increases compressive load on the discs and facet joints, perpetuating nerve irritation and pain.

Retraining the TrA through breathing coordination and the ADIM technique restores this natural brace, reducing pressure on the sciatic nerve and creating the conditions for healing.

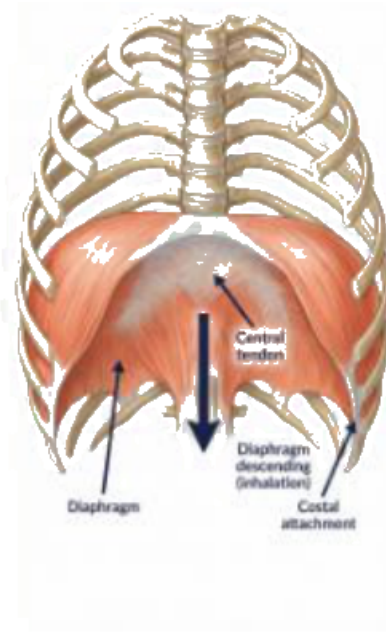
Before you can retrain the TrA, you need to understand the three muscles it works with. Together they form a pressurised cylinder that protects your lumbar spine and sciatic nerve. Retraining all three is the foundation of lasting pain relief.



Transversus Abdominis (TrA)

Transversus Abdominis (TrA)

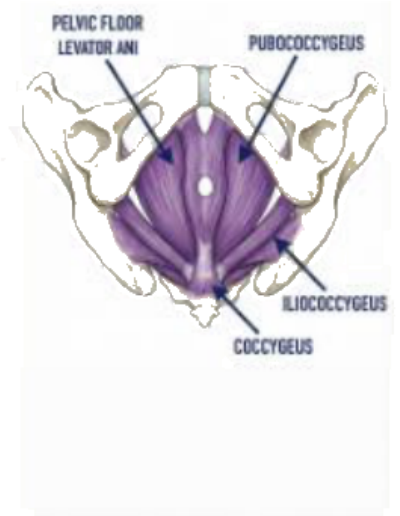
The deepest abdominal muscle. Its horizontal fibres wrap around the waist like a corset, compressing the abdomen and tensioning the thoracolumbar fascia to brace the lumbar spine.



Diaphragm (Roof)

Diaphragm (Roof)

The primary breathing muscle, forming the roof of the pressure cylinder. On inhalation it descends, increasing intra-abdominal pressure. It co-activates with the TrA to create spinal stability.



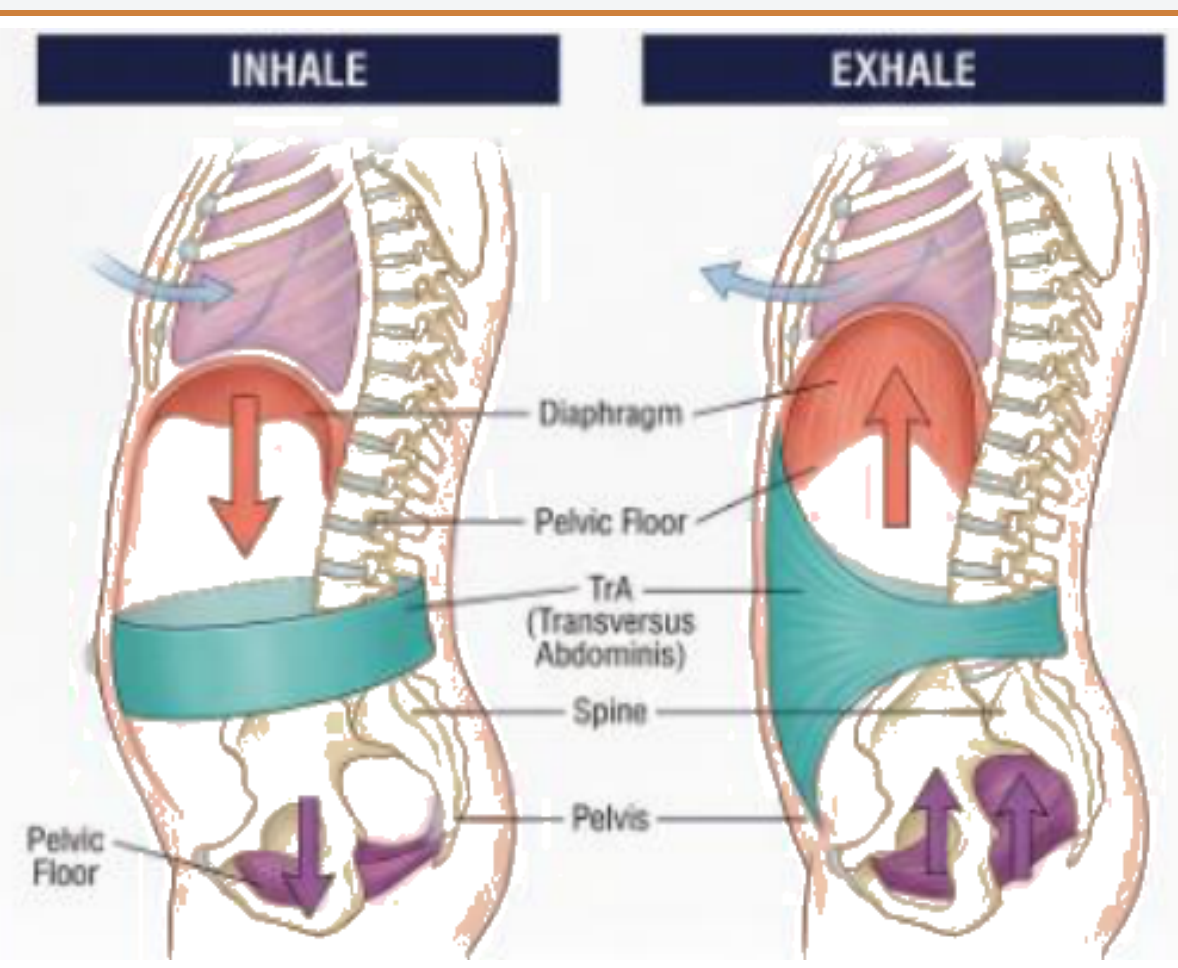
Pelvic Floor (Floor)

Pelvic Floor (Floor)

The base of the pressure cylinder. It mirrors the diaphragm — descending on inhale, rising on exhale. Weakness here disrupts the entire cylinder and reduces TrA effectiveness.

Key Principle: These three muscles must work together as a coordinated unit. Retraining one in isolation is insufficient — the programme addresses all three simultaneously through breathing, ADIM, and progressive loading.

The first step in TrA retraining is learning to coordinate your breath with your deep core. The diaphragm and pelvic floor move together like a piston: on inhalation both descend; on exhalation both rise. The TrA gently activates on the exhale, creating the internal brace.



Inhale: diaphragm & pelvic floor descend. Exhale: both rise, TrA gently activates.

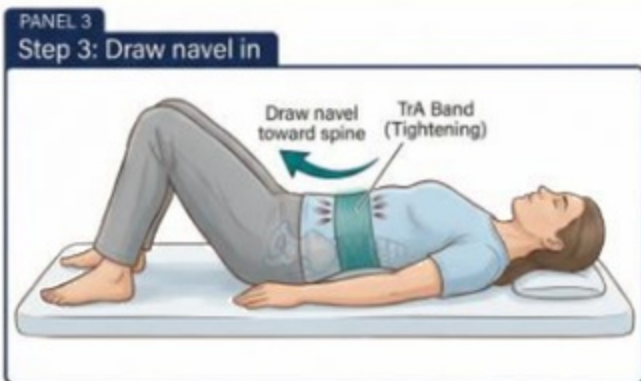
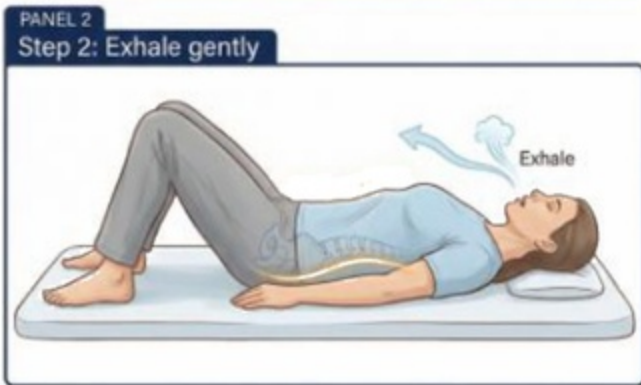
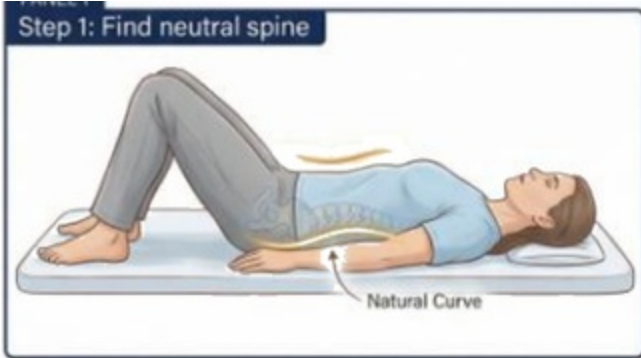
Breathing Retraining Protocol (Weeks 1–2)

1. Lie on your back, knees bent, one hand on your lower abdomen.
2. Inhale slowly through your nose for 4 counts — feel your belly rise gently.
3. Exhale slowly through your nose for 6 counts — feel your belly fall.
4. At the end of the exhale, notice a gentle natural drawing-in of the lower abdomen. This is your TrA beginning to activate.
5. Repeat 10 breaths, twice daily.

The Abdominal Drawing-In Manoeuvre (ADIM) is the key activation cue for the TrA. It teaches you to isolate and engage the deep core without bracing the superficial muscles.

ADIM Protocol (Weeks 1–4)

- 1 Starting Position:** Lie on your back, knees bent, feet flat on the floor. Place one hand on your lower abdomen just below your navel.
- 2 Inhale:** Breathe in slowly through your nose for 4 counts. Let your belly rise gently into your hand.
- 3 Exhale & Draw In:** As you exhale through your nose for 6 counts, gently draw your navel toward your spine. Do not hold your breath or suck in hard.
- 4 Hold:** Maintain the gentle drawing-in for 5–10 seconds while breathing normally. You should feel a subtle tension, not a hard brace.
- 5 Repeat:** 10 repetitions, twice daily. Progress to seated and standing positions in weeks 3–4.



Tip: The TrA works at 30% of its maximum — never a hard brace. If you feel your superficial abs grip or your breath stop, you are working too hard. Soften and try again.

2. ANTI-INFLAMMATORY EATING

Food is medicine. An anti-inflammatory diet reduces the chemical signals that irritate the sciatic nerve and provides the nutrients needed for nerve repair.



Grilled salmon & leafy salad — a perfect anti-inflammatory lunch

MEAL	EXAMPLE	KEY BENEFIT
Breakfast	Oatmeal with berries, walnuts & cinnamon	Omega-3s, antioxidants
Lunch	Leafy salad with grilled salmon & olive oil	EPA/DHA for nerve health
Dinner	Lentil soup with broccoli & quinoa	Fibre, magnesium
Snack	Apple slices with almond butter	Polyphenols, healthy fats

Foods to reduce: Processed sugar, refined carbohydrates, seed oils (canola, sunflower), alcohol, and ultra-processed foods all amplify neurogenic inflammation.

3. BODY SCAN MEDITATION

Chronic pain rewires the brain's threat-detection system. Body scan meditation is a clinically validated technique to retrain this response.

1. Lie comfortably on your back, eyes closed, arms by your sides.
2. Take three slow, deep breaths to settle the nervous system.
3. Bring your awareness to your feet — notice any sensations without judgment.
4. Slowly move awareness upward: ankles, calves, knees, thighs, hips, lower back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, arms, neck, and head.
5. When you reach the top, take one final deep breath and gently open your eyes.

Research shows that body scan meditation activates the parasympathetic nervous system, reducing cortisol levels and calming the central sensitisation that amplifies chronic nerve pain. Over time, it helps the brain "unlearn" the pain response, making it one of the most powerful non-pharmaceutical tools available for sciatica recovery.

Duration: 5–10 minutes daily. Morning or before sleep works best. Consistent practice over 4–8 weeks produces measurable reductions in pain catastrophising.



CHAPTER 05

Supportive Supplements

CHAPTER 05 · SUPPORTIVE SUPPLEMENTS

While food is always first, certain supplements can give your body an extra healing edge. Always consult your doctor before starting anything new.

SUPPLEMENT	HOW IT HELPS	TYPICAL DOSE
Omega-3s (Fish Oil)	Calms nerve irritation and inflammation.	1–2 g daily
Turmeric (Curcumin)	Blocks inflammatory pathways, reduces pain.	500 mg, 2–3x daily
Magnesium Glycinate	Relaxes muscles, calms the nervous system.	200–400 mg at bedtime
B-Complex Vitamins	Supports nerve health and energy production.	As directed on label

Blending Traditional & Holistic Care

CONVENTIONAL CARE — THE FOUNDATION

Physical therapy guides your movement and rebuilds strength. In some cases, targeted medication helps manage severe pain while the body heals.

HOLISTIC HEALING — THE LAYERS

Acupuncture releases pain-blocking endorphins. Health coaching keeps you motivated. Traditional Chinese Medicine, yoga, and mindfulness all complement the conventional approach beautifully.

"Think of it as a partnership: your doctor, your physical therapist, your health coach, and you — all working together for your well-being."



CHAPTER 07

Your Tracking Toolkit

CHAPTER 07 · YOUR TRACKING TOOLKIT

Tracking your progress helps you see what's working and keeps you motivated. Use this chart each week to map your journey.

WEEK	PAIN LEVEL (1-10)	ENERGY LEVEL (1-10)	NOTES
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			

"This isn't just about getting out of pain — it's about building a foundation for a vibrant, active, and joyful life. You've got this."



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mina Kavia

Mina Kavia is a Functional Medicine Practitioner, Physical Therapist, and Doctor of Traditional Chinese Medicine. She specialises in nerve pain rehabilitation — helping people with sciatica, neuropathy, and chronic nerve pain recover fully and sustainably. Mina blends conventional rehabilitation with functional medicine and holistic approaches to address the root causes of nerve pain, not just the symptoms.

[NERVECOACHMINA.COM](https://nervecoachmina.com)

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Ready to Begin Your Healing Journey?

Visit nervecoachmina.com to explore personalised programs, book a consultation, and start building a foundation for a vibrant, pain-free life.

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