

Bycycle: To Tingle or Not to Tingle?

by Stephen M. Prescott

San Antonio (TX) Police Department

Almost every rider feels a tingling sensation in his or her hands, feet, and groin area. Is this normal? Some say “yes, since most riders feel it, it must be normal.” But do you feel that same tingle or numbness when you walk, run, or sit? No, you don’t, so which is normal?

I have been a police officer for 15 years and have been on bike patrol for six years. It is the greatest job in law enforcement. I, too, thought the tingle was normal. Go on a long ride, your hands and feet go numb. You get a tingling in your groin area but not in a good way. Normal, right? While pedaling after someone, you stand to get that burst of speed and you get a pain in your legs as you come up. Normal, right? Wrong.

Three years ago, the National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH), came to our department to do a study on the use of noseless, or hornless, saddles. It was at that time that I realized the tingle was *not* normal. Dr. Steven Schrader brought with him several different noseless saddles as well as electrodes and testing devices. I participated in the study and tried several of the noseless saddles. I chose the BiSaddle by Bycycle, Inc. (www.bycycleinc.com) To me, this was the most comfortable option, and it still looked somewhat like a traditional saddle, but without the nose.

I have taken my work bike and personal bike, both outfitted with the BiSaddle, up and down stairs, up and over curbs, ascending and descending hills and on long rides. I have worked long hours on it. I have completed a few obstacle courses without experiencing any balance issues. I have chased individuals on foot and in cars (I am starting to sound like a Dr. Seuss book...). For the last three years, I have not had the tingle.

So the answer to the question is, **“No, the tingle is not normal.”** There are loads of papers out there that explain the causes of the tingle – cutting off the blood flow to a main vein or pinching a nerve – and the sometimes resulting sexual dysfunction. They are all in technical terms but what I have experienced speaks louder than papers that I don’t understand. The bottom line is that since I started riding with the noseless BiSaddle, I have not had the tingle.

There are many noseless saddles out there. Find the one that’s right for you. The one that’s right for me is the BiSaddle by Bycycle Inc. Bycycle is a member of the IPMBA PPP; try the noseless saddle for a week or two and make up your own mind.

The choice is yours: **Tingle or No Tingle – Be Numb or Have Feeling.**

Note from the Manufacturer: Bycycle Inc. has worked with Stephen Prescott and the SAPD bike police over the past year to develop a new foam outer surface material. Of the 48 bike patrol officers, 38 use an alternative saddle design. Of these 38, 26 (including one of three female officers) use the BiSaddle.

Stephen Prescott has been a San Antonio Police Officer for more than 15 years, including six on the Downtown Bike Patrol. He can be reached at presposse6@hotmail.com.

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