



Angelica Masciale <angelicamasciale@gmail.com>

LUMBAR DISC ARTHROPLASTY

1 message

John Masciale <johnmascialemd@msn.com>
To: Araceli Angie Masciale <amasciale@msn.com>

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LUMBAR DISC ARTHROPLASTY

Lumbar disc arthroplasty, also known as total disc replacement or artificial disc replacement, is a surgical procedure used to treat degenerative disc disease in the lumbar spine (lower back region). Similar to anterior cervical disc arthroplasty, this procedure aims to replace a damaged or degenerated disc with an artificial disc implant to preserve motion and flexibility in the spine.

Here are some key points about lumbar disc arthroplasty:

- 1. Surgical Technique:** The procedure is typically performed under general anesthesia. An incision is made in the abdomen or back, depending on the surgical approach chosen by the surgeon. The damaged disc is removed, and the space is prepared to accommodate the artificial disc implant. The prosthetic disc is then inserted into the disc space to restore height and maintain motion in the lumbar spine. The design of the artificial disc allows for controlled movement, replicating the function of a natural disc.
- 2. Maintaining Motion:** The goal of lumbar disc arthroplasty is to preserve motion and flexibility in the lumbar spine. By replacing the damaged disc with an artificial disc, this procedure aims to maintain normal biomechanics of the spine and reduce stress on adjacent segments. The prosthetic disc allows controlled movement in flexion, extension, and rotational movements.
- 3. Patient Selection:** Lumbar disc arthroplasty is typically recommended for patients with single-level or two-level degenerative disc disease who have not responded to conservative treatments such as physical therapy or medications. Candidates should have no significant facet joint disease, spinal instability, or severe osteoporosis, as these factors may affect the success of the procedure. The final decision depends on the surgeon's assessment and the individual patient's condition.
- 4. Advantages:** Lumbar disc arthroplasty offers potential advantages over traditional fusion surgeries. By preserving motion, it may help alleviate pain, improve function, and maintain flexibility in the lower back. It may also reduce the risk of adjacent segment degeneration compared to fusion surgeries, as it allows for more natural distribution of forces in the spine. Additionally, some studies suggest that disc arthroplasty may result in quicker recovery times and better overall patient satisfaction compared to fusion surgeries.
- 5. Risks and Considerations:** As with any surgical procedure, there are potential risks and complications associated with lumbar disc arthroplasty. These may include infection, bleeding, nerve injury, implant-related complications (such as malposition, dislocation, or wear), persistent pain, and the need for further surgeries. The decision to undergo lumbar disc arthroplasty should be carefully considered and discussed with a qualified spine surgeon, taking into account the individual patient's condition, medical history, preferences, and potential risks or contraindications.
- 6. Postoperative Care:** After lumbar disc arthroplasty, patients may require a brief hospital stay for monitoring. They will be advised to gradually resume normal activities and may undergo physical therapy to help restore strength and mobility in the lower back. Regular follow-up visits will be scheduled to monitor the healing process and evaluate the function of the artificial disc implant.

Lumbar disc arthroplasty can be an effective treatment option for select patients with lumbar degenerative disc disease. However, the decision to undergo this procedure should be made in consultation with a qualified spine surgeon, who can evaluate the patient's specific condition, preferences, and potential risks or contraindications.

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