

[IMAGE]

The Problem With Surgery for Low Back Pain

By Editorial Staff

If you've ever experienced back pain, whether acute or chronic, there are a few facts you should know. First, you're not alone; studies suggest 80 percent of adults experience at least one episode of low back pain in their lifetime. Second, thousands of people undergo back surgery every year for back pain, putting their bodies at risk for surgical complications. Third, chiropractic and other conservative, nonsurgical treatment methods have been shown to be effective for uncomplicated cases of LBP.

And here's one more important fact: Research suggests the big problem with surgery for back pain, particularly chronic back pain (recurrent pain over weeks or months), is that *it doesn't seem to work* – at least not any better than conservative care. The latest evidence: study findings published in the research journal *Spine* that found: "After an average of 11 years follow-up, there was no difference in patient self-rated outcomes between fusion and multidisciplinary cognitive-behavioral and exercise rehabilitation for cLBP (chronic low-back pain).

surgery - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark The results suggest that, given the increased risks of surgery and the lack of deterioration in nonoperative outcomes over time, the use of lumbar fusion in cLBP patients should not be favored in health care systems where multidisciplinary cognitive-behavioral and exercise rehabilitation programs are available."

This isn't the first study to suggest surgery isn't your best option when it comes to the back. And if you think you can go to any type of doctor, think again. Expertise aside, research indicates that the type of doctor you visit first – namely a surgeon vs. a doctor of chiropractic – can essentially determine whether you'll eventually undergo surgery. So think surgery last and visit a chiropractor first. Your back will thank you for it.

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