

# Preparing for Your Spine Surgery

## Lateral Lumbar Interbody Fusion

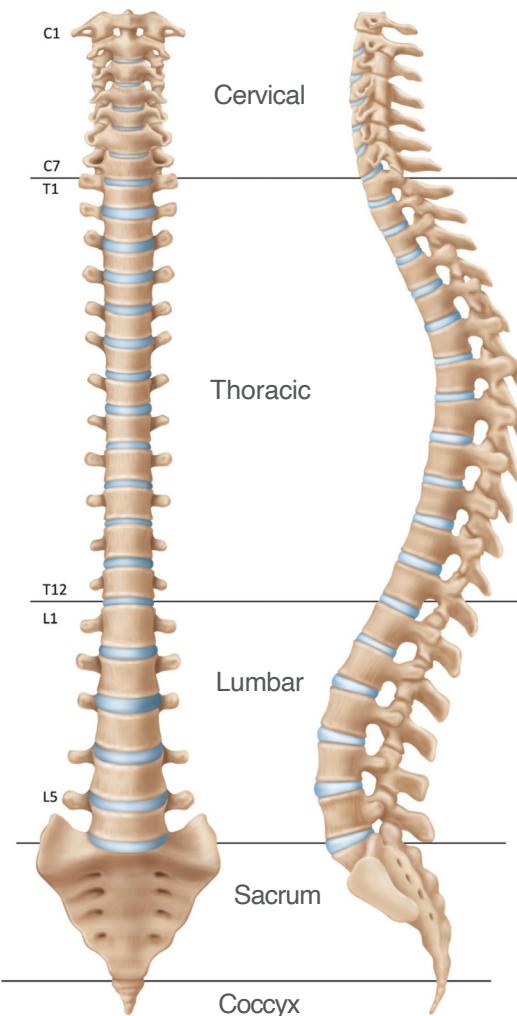
### Lateral Lumbar Interbody Fusion

Dr. Desai has recommended spine surgery to treat your condition. This information will help you understand and prepare for your surgery. Your care provider can show you where in your spine your surgery will occur.

#### The spine

The spine consists of 33 connected bones called vertebrae (Figure 1). Between each vertebra lies a disk that serves as a cushion.

Figure 1. The spine



## Lumbar spine

The lumbar spine is made up of 5 vertebrae in the lower part of your back. The main function of the lumbar spine is to bear the weight of the body. These vertebrae are larger in size to absorb the stress of lifting and carrying heavy objects.

## Spinal fusion

A spinal fusion is a type of surgery where 2 or more vertebrae are joined together. A spinal fusion is needed to repair certain parts of the spine. The damaged part (disk) is removed and replaced with a bone graft or intervertebral device. The segment is secured with screws holding the vertebrae together. As the segment heals, the vertebrae fuse and grow together into 1 bone. This makes the spine more stable.

Your specific type of spinal fusion is called a lateral lumbar interbody fusion (LLIF).

## LLIF

LLIF may be a 2-stage surgery. For the first part, you will be laying on your side in the lateral position (Figure 2). Padding protects your skin as needed. Using X-ray guidance, an incision is made on your side at the level where the surgery is needed. Muscles are moved aside and an instrument called a retractor is placed to allow access to the spine. Fluoroscopy (using X-rays) is used to target the disk space. The damaged disk is removed (Figure 3), and the bone graft/device is inserted (interbody) (Figures 4 and 5).

Once the lateral portion of the surgery is finished, you may be repositioned on your stomach. The surgeon will make a new incision on your back. Screws and rods will be placed to secure the vertebrae, if needed (Figure 6).

Figure 2. Lateral position

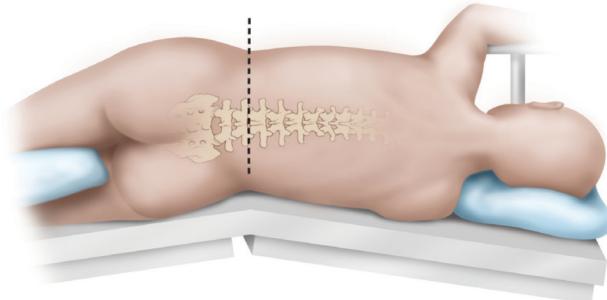


Figure 3. Damaged disk removed

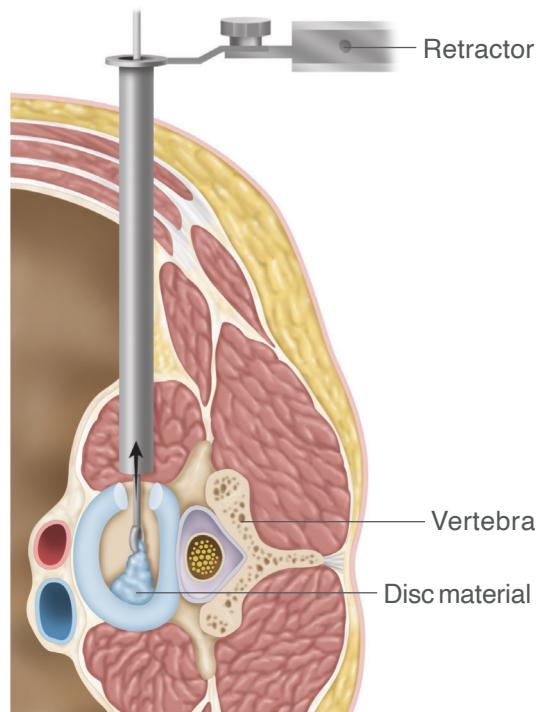


Figure 4. Interbody bone graft/device placed

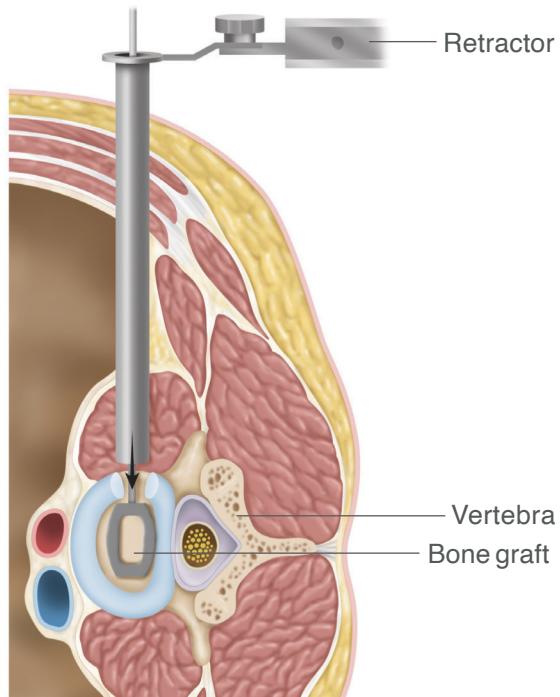


Figure 6. Screws and rods holding the vertebrae together (back view)

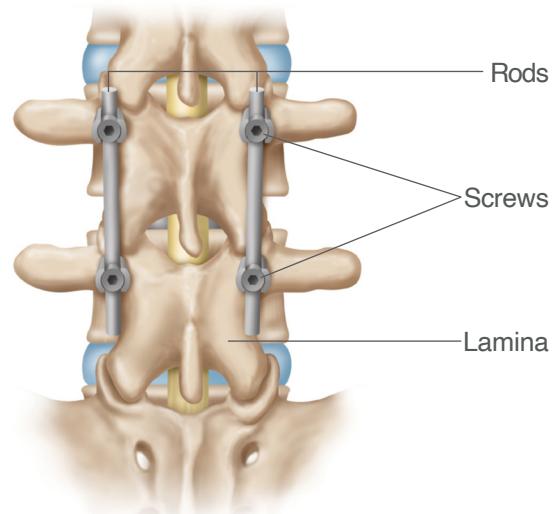
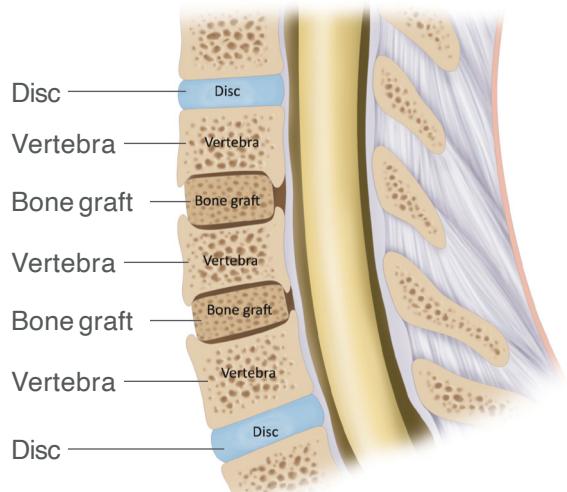


Figure 5. Bone graft in spine (side view)



## X-ray images of LLIF



Pre Op



Post Op



Pre Op



Post Op

## Meet Your Surgeon



Dr. Parth N. Desai, M.D., is a fellowship-trained orthopedic spine surgeon who provides comprehensive spine care to patients in the Conyers and Covington area. Though originally from Georgia, Dr. Desai completed his spine training at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, IL. He completed his undergraduate at the University of Georgia and medical school at Mercer University. Dr. Desai specializes in the full spectrum of spinal conditions involving the neck and back, including herniated discs, spinal stenosis, degenerative disc disease, spinal instability, adult and pediatric spinal deformity, and trauma. Dr. Desai uses a holistic approach to the treatment of neck and back conditions, and considers surgery to be a last resort option. Dr. Desai has expertise in minimally invasive spine surgery, spinal deformity correction, and in the treatment of failed neck and back surgery.



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