

Preparing for Your Spine Surgery

Lumbar Microdiscectomy

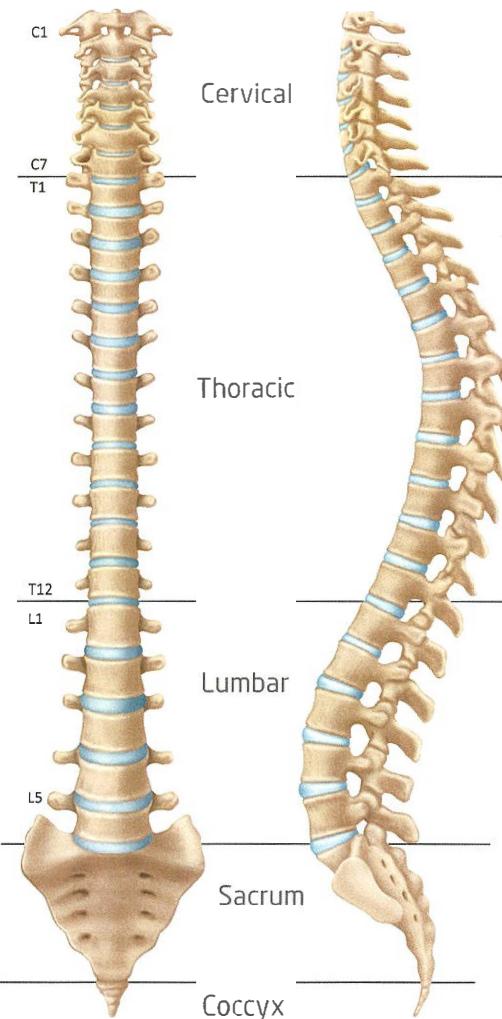
Surgery Date: _____

Your surgeon has recommended spine surgery to treat your condition. This information will help you understand and prepare for your surgery. Your healthcare 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 disc 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 more of the body's weight. For this reason, the vertebrae in the lumbar spine are the largest.

Herniated disk

The bones in the spine are called vertebrae. Disks are fibrous cushions between the vertebrae. A herniated disk is when a part of the disk bulges (or "leaks") out through a weak area in the outer wall (Figure 2). A herniated disk can irritate nearby nerves. This can cause pain, tingling, numbness or weakness in your back or leg, and bowel or bladder problems.

Lumbar microdiscectomy

Lumbar microdiscectomy is a type of surgery for a herniated disk. The bulging disk material between the vertebrae in your lower back is removed to relieve pressure on your spinal cord or nerves.

The surgeon makes an incision in your lower back at the level where the surgery is needed. Muscles are moved aside. An instrument called a retractor is put in place. The back part of your vertebra (lamina) is removed first to allow the surgeon to see the herniated disk (Figure 3). Only the part of the disk that has herniated is removed. The majority of the disk is left as is. The incision is usually closed with skin glue and Steri-stripsTM (tape strips).

Figure 2. Cross section of the spine

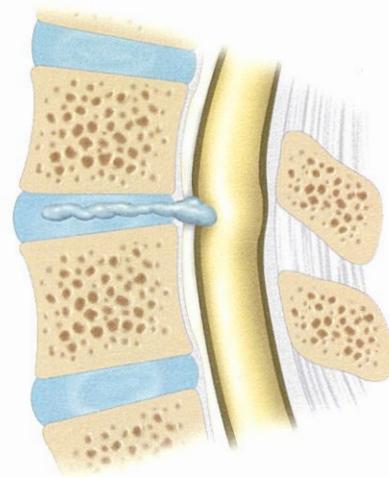
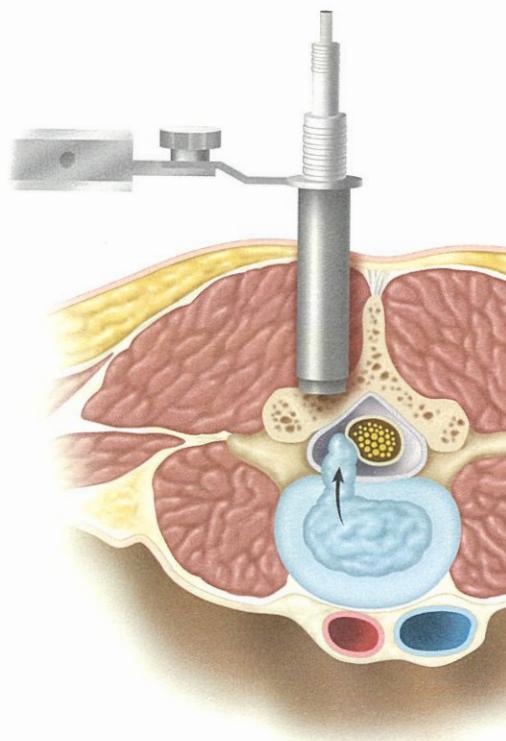


Figure 3. Use of a surgical retractor to allow access to the spine



Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of a herniated disk



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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