

Radiofrequency Treatment of Back Pain

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Back pain is one of the most common ailments that sends people to the doctor. Who out there has not had pain at one time or another in the lower spine? It can be disabling at times or just miserable and annoying.

Fortunately the discomfort from strains or lifting injuries is usually temporary and improves in a few days. It probably will re-appear, but you are very happy when it leaves.

There are multiple reasons why patients have low back pain.

It isn't the purpose of this article to be a general discussion of back trouble.

Facet joints

Facet joints are little joints in the rear part of the vertebra that are in pairs for each vertebral segment. They are often the culprits in chronic pain that does not respond to medication or physical therapy. These little stabilizing joints are prone to arthritis changes.

Radiofrequency Ablation

This procedure that I will explain shortly is not for someone who has minor aches and pains in their back. It is for people who have major amounts of daily chronic pain. If it is demonstrated by certain tests, that facet joint changes are causing the problem radiofrequency may help you.

What is Done?

It has to be learned which facet joints may be causing the trouble. Using special x-ray equipment a needle can be placed in a facet joint. Then a combination of anesthetic and steroid can be injected. If relief is only temporary it still gives valuable information about the source of the pain. In some cases relief can last for weeks or months.

If/when the pain returns you could be someone who might benefit from ablation treatment. In this procedure a small needle can be guided into the area of the nerve branch and a small electrical current can cauterize and eliminate the nerve. This prevents the nerve from sending more pain messages to the brain.

It can bring much more long lasting relief than simple injection. How long relief lasts varies from one patient to another. Several months to years of relief is always the goal.

All Orthopaedic Surgery problems can be evaluated by Dr. Haverbush at the Lakeview Community Wellness Center in Lakeview or at the office in Alma at 315 Warwick Dr., Alma, Michigan.

Please call 989-463-6092 for information or to schedule an appointment.

Future Lakeview Community Wellness Center Clinic dates are Friday September 18 and Friday October 2, 2009.

Please don't forget there is a wealth of accurate information about all the Orthopaedic conditions I treat on the office teaching website www.orthopodsurgeon.com. Please log on and check it out.

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free functional lives.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush