

## Accurately diagnosing and treating pain with personalized care

Our network of pain management physicians treats a variety of conditions, using comprehensive diagnostic techniques and non-surgical treatments for all musculoskeletal pain.

To learn more about conditions treated, visit [NationalSpine.com](http://NationalSpine.com) or ask your affiliated physician.

# Percutaneous Discectomy

## Advanced Treatment for Herniated Discs

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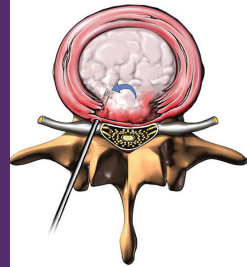
### Treatment Brochure

LEAVE PAIN  
BEHIND.  
**GET BUSY  
LIVING.**

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The spinal column is made up of bony vertebrae. Between each vertebra, there are soft, rubbery structures called discs. When a disc is herniated, the inside of the disc starts to protrude into the spinal canal and put pressure on the nerves, causing pain in the back, legs, neck or arms.



A percutaneous discectomy (percutaneous procedures are done by needle-puncture of the skin) removes part of a herniated disc that is irritating a nerve, resulting in prompt pain relief.

At our network of pain management centers, we have an array of treatments for herniated discs. After gaining a complete understanding of your individual medical situation and lifestyle, our physicians can help you decide if a minimally invasive discectomy is right for you.

# Percutaneous Discectomy

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## What is a herniated disc?

A herniated disc is a common disc problem that is also referred to as a slipped disc or ruptured disc.

Discs separate and support the bones of the spine, functioning as shock absorbers. Each disc has an outer layer of tough tissue, which surrounds an inner jelly-like core. If the outer layer wall of the disc weakens, a portion of the inner disc may push through the wall, forming a herniation. Located behind the discs are nerves traveling to the other parts of your body, which may become compressed or irritated by the herniated discs.

## What is a discectomy?

Percutaneous discectomy, sometimes called a Dekompressor discectomy because of the tools used, is a minimally invasive procedure used to reduce a herniated disc. The procedure uses a small needle to reach the disc, eliminating the need for an incision. The needle is guided to the disc by fluoroscopy (live x-ray) and a probe with a rotating tip is carefully inserted through the needle.

When the probe is turned on, its rotating tip removes small portions of the disc nucleus, creating empty space, allowing the disc to reabsorb the herniation and relieving pressure on the nerve. Because only enough of the disc is removed to reduce pressure inside the disc, the spine remains stable.

The procedure is usually reserved for patients who have not had success with conservative treatments like medications, physical therapy and nerve blocks. Typically, the patients are not candidates for surgery because the disc bulge is very small.

## How long does it take?

Percutaneous discectomy is performed with local anesthesia, avoiding the risks of general anesthesia. The treatment is done in an office-based outpatient setting and usually takes less than an hour.

## What are the expected results?

Studies have shown percutaneous discectomy to be successful in reducing pain and medication requirements, while increasing function in up to 90 percent of patients. Recovery is fast and scarring is minimized because no muscles or bone are cut during the procedure. Most patients go home within hours of the procedure, and many are able to resume work and normal daily activities within three to five days.

In addition, studies have shown that the rate of complication is smaller with percutaneous discectomy versus an open surgical discectomy.

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