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## Lumbar Decompression

### WHAT IS THE SURGERY?

- The goal of the surgery is done to take pressures off of the nerves in the center of the spine.
- This surgery is done to take pressure off of nerves. Common causes of the pressure on nerves are central stenosis, lateral recess stenosis, and facet cysts.
- Surgery is done from the back, through an incision that is about 1.5 inches for each level that is treated.
- Dr. Wanderman takes pressure off of the nerves by creating a window in the back of the bone, removing nonessential bone a ligament that is pushing on the nerves.

### POST-OPERATIVE COURSE

- Most patients can go home the same day as surgery, but sometimes Dr. Wanderman will place a drain and require patients spend a night in the hospital.
- Your first post-op check is approximately 2-3 weeks after surgery. You must limit bending, lifting and twisting at the waist while your back heals, No lifting greater than 10 -15 pounds until we see you back.
- You are able to walk immediately after surgery and you may walk as much as you like letting your comfort be your guide.
- Postoperatively, patients typically return to sedentary jobs (1-3 weeks), light jobs (2-4 weeks), and medium jobs (4-6 weeks).
- At 2-4 weeks after the surgery you are able to exercise on a stationary bike or treadmill. At 4-6 weeks you may do abdominal crunches to strengthen your stomach and you are able to do some light weight lifting, with the exclusion of dead lifts, military press, squats, or other exercises which load the spine.

### RISKS OF SURGERY

- Blood loss: blood loss is minimal with this type of surgery.
- Infection: also a small risk, less than 1 or 2%. You will receive antibiotics before and after your surgery.
- Injury to nerves: less than risk of infection but may cause weakness or decreased sensation. These are usually temporary. Often these are present before surgery.
- Dural Tear (spinal fluid leak), small risk slightly more than infection, but occurs more commonly in patients with previous surgery at the same level. If a dural tear occurs it is repaired at the time of surgery and usually results in a short hospital stay, you would have to lie flat for 24-48 hours in the hospital.
- Other risks include anesthesia, residual spine or nerve pain, and others discussed in the office.