

Deciding About Herniated Disc Surgery

A herniated disc can make it hard for you to do the things you enjoy.

Sometimes the pain may be so bad, it's all you can think about.

You may be at the point where you are deciding whether or not to have surgery.

Not having surgery means other treatment, such as medicines and exercise.

It also means giving yourself time.

This is because symptoms often get better over time.

But no matter what you choose, there's a lot to think about when making this kind of decision.

This video explains the benefits and risks of having surgery or not having surgery.

If you're weighing your options, this information can help you make the decision that's right for you.

And it may even help you feel more confident about your choice.

Okay, let's start with surgery.

It may be time to consider surgery if you've already tried other treatments and they haven't worked.

Surgery may relieve your pain sooner.

But it doesn't always work.

And a year later, most people who have surgery feel about the same as people who chose not to have it.

Now, it's important to remember that any surgery has some risks.

Besides possible problems from anesthesia or infection, there's a slight risk that surgery could cause other problems, or even make your back pain worse.

Now, your other choice is to not have surgery.

Your doctor will talk to you about other treatment options instead of surgery.

These may include changing the way you do your activities; taking medicines to manage pain; and trying different exercises, physical therapy, or steroid injections.

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Some people find it helps to try a combination of nonsurgical treatments.

Deciding not to have surgery also has risks.

For example, there could be a risk of nerve damage because of pressure from the disc.

Ultimately, it's your decision: Manage your pain with surgery or without surgery.

Two questions to consider: Is your pain bad enough that you're willing to accept the risk of surgery?

Or would you feel more comfortable trying to manage your pain without surgery?

This is your choice.

And it's one you get to make when you're ready.

Your thoughts and feelings are important in making a decision that you'll be happy with.

And they're important to your doctor.

By working with your doctor, you can decide which choice will be best for you.