

# Intradiscal Therapies



## WHAT ARE INTRADISCAL THERAPIES?

Back pain is often linked to problems with the spinal discs — the cushions between the bones of your spine. Intradiscal therapies are procedures that help identify or treat pain coming directly from these discs.

Among these therapies, discography is one of the most important because it helps confirm whether a damaged or degenerating disc is the true source of your pain.



## HOW DOES IT WORK?

Discography is a diagnostic procedure used to pinpoint painful spinal discs. Under X-ray guidance, a contrast dye is injected into one or more discs. If the injection reproduces the pain you typically feel, it signals that the disc may be the cause of your symptoms. The dye also enhances imaging, giving your care team a clearer view of disc structure and any damage that might not appear on MRI or CT scans.

Discography is often the first step before considering advanced treatments such as disc repair, surgery, or other targeted intradiscal procedures.

## WHO IS A GOOD CANDIDATE?

Discography or other intradiscal therapies may be recommended if you have:

- **Chronic low back pain that hasn't improved with conservative care (physical therapy, medication, etc.)**
- **Pain is suspected to originate from one or more spinal discs due to herniation or degeneration**
- **Imaging studies that don't clearly show the source of pain**
- **A need to confirm the pain generator before surgery or other advanced treatments**

## WHAT TO EXPECT?

- 1** Before the procedure, your specialist will review your medical history and imaging results to confirm that discography is appropriate.
- 2** During the procedure, you'll lie on an exam table while the skin is cleaned and numbed with a local anesthetic.
- 3** Using X-ray guidance, a thin needle is placed into the disc and contrast dye is injected. If the injection recreates your typical pain, it suggests that disc is the pain generator. The dye also helps show disc structure on imaging.
- 4** The test usually takes less than an hour. Afterward, you'll rest briefly before going home. Some soreness at the injection site is common for a day or two.

The results of the discography guide your next steps in care. If a disc is identified as the source of pain, your provider may recommend:

- **Conservative options, such as physical therapy or injections, if surgery is not yet needed**
- **Intradiscal therapies that target the damaged disc directly**
- **Surgical consultation to determine if disc repair or replacement is the most appropriate option**

If discography does not reproduce your pain, your provider may look for other possible sources, ensuring that treatment is focused on the actual cause of your symptoms.

## INSURANCE AND BILLING

Intradiscal therapies, like discography, are generally covered by insurance when medically necessary. Our team will verify your coverage and obtain any prior authorizations, so you know what to expect.

## IMPROVE YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE

**Intradiscal therapies can help you finally get answers about the source of your back pain and, if needed, treat it at the root.**

