

Steroid injections prove effective in treatment of lumbar disc herniations

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The use of epidural steroid injections may be a more efficient treatment option for lumbar disc herniations, according to research presented today at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's Specialty Day in San Francisco.

"Our study showed an 89% success rate in athletes returning to play after suffering an injury during practice or a game," commented lead author Aaron J. Krych, MD, from the Mayo Clinic's Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. "These injections are a safe initial therapy in athletes that do not have neurological deficits, allows them to participate effectively in physical therapy sooner, and can significantly reduce the time a player misses."

Lumbar disc herniation is a back injury common in sports such as football, which involve direct contact and sometimes jumping or twisting motions.

The study examined cases of 17 professional American football players from one team between 2003 and 2010. Participants received injections consisting of 80-160 mg of [Triamcinolone](#) and anesthetic, with an average loss of 2.8 practices and 0.6 games.

"While we are excited to see the positive results with this treatment, it cannot be viewed as a cure-all," cautioned Dr. Krych. "At the end of the day, certain injuries will still require surgery and long-term recovery."

Provided by American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine

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