Improved driving reaction times after lumbar disc sx

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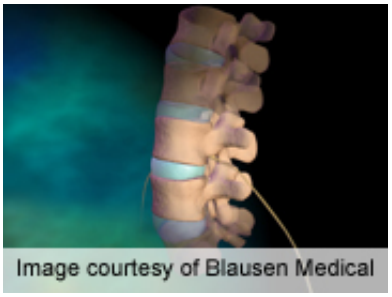

Driving reaction times, which are increased for patients with radiculopathy, improve after lumbar disc surgery, according to a study published in the November issue of the *European Spine Journal*.

(HealthDay)—Driving reaction times (DRTs), which are increased for patients with radiculopathy, improve after lumbar disc surgery, according to a study published in the November issue of the *European Spine Journal*.

Martin Thaler, M.D., from Innsbruck Medical University in Austria, and colleagues conducted a prospective study involving 46 consecutive patients with lumbar disc herniation (mean age, 48.9 years; 23 each with left- and right-side radiculopathy) and 31 healthy controls. Back and leg pain and DRT were evaluated preoperatively, upon discharge from the hospital for lumbar disc herniation surgery, and at the five-week follow-up visit.

The researchers found that DRT improved significantly for patients with both right-side radiculopathy (preoperative, 664 ms; postoperative, 605ms; at follow-up, 593 ms) and left-side radiculopathy (675, 638, and 619 ms, respectively). There was a moderate correlation between pain and DRT. Controls had a significantly lower DRT at all three testing times (mean, 487 ms).

"From the improvements seen when comparing preoperative and postoperative DRTs, we conclude that it appears to be safe to continue driving after hospital discharge for patients with radiculopathy caused by lumbar disc herniation and treated with lumbar disc surgery," the authors write.

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)