

Lumbar spinal stenosis surgery rates vary by race

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(HealthDay)—Rates of hospitalization for lumbar spinal stenosis surgery vary significantly by race and ethnic group, according to a study published in the Dec. 15 issue of *Spine*.

Richard L. Skolasky, Sc.D., from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and colleagues utilized data from the Nationwide Inpatient Sample and U.S. Census to calculate associations between race and ethnicity and the rates of surgical hospitalization for lumbar spinal stenosis. Adjustments for age, sex, insurance, income status, [geographical location](#), and comorbidities were made to all models.

The researchers found that, from 2000 through 2009, the overall surgical

hospitalization rate for [lumbar spinal stenosis](#) increased by 30 percent, with surgical hospitalization rates varying substantially across racial and ethnic groups. White, non-Hispanics had the highest rate (1.074 per 1,000) in 2009, compared with black, non-Hispanics (0.558 per 1,000) and Hispanics (0.339 per 1,000). These differences were seen across time.

"Possible causes were (1) differences in clinical decision making among spine care providers with regard to offering [surgical care](#) to minority populations; (2) differences in access to care because of financial, educational, or geographical barriers; and (3) differences in attitudes toward surgical care among those of different racial and [ethnic groups](#)," the authors write.

Relevant financial activities outside the submitted work were disclosed: board membership, grants, patents, royalties, stocks.

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