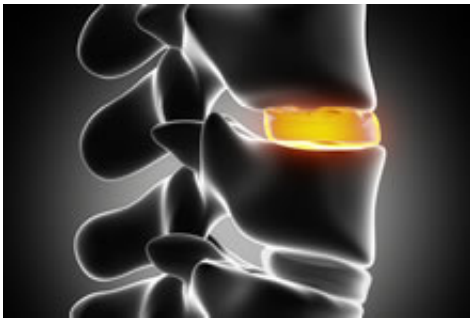


Clinical trial shows stem cell injections reduce low back pain (w/ Video)

February 27 2014, by Melva Robertson



A single injection of stem cells into degenerative discs reduced low back pain for at least 12 months according to results of a 100-patient, phase II, international clinical trial that included researchers at the Emory Orthopaedics & Spine Center.

W. Jeremy Beckworth, MD, assistant professor of Orthopaedics and Rehab Medicine, was part of the trial that used injections of bone marrow stem cells called mesenchymal precursor cells (MPCs) to reduce pain. On average researchers found a pain reduction greater than 50 percent at 12 months. Additionally, there was less need for [pain medication](#), improvement in function, and less need for further surgical and non-surgical spine interventions. These results were found in patients with moderate to severe discogenic low back pain.

"These are very exciting findings," explains Beckworth. "The results provide significant hope for a condition that has been very tough to treat. Discogenic low back pain, a painful [degenerative disc](#), is the most common cause of chronic low back [pain](#)."

The phase II clinical trial builds on a previously reported preclinical study showing highly purified MPCs were able to repair and restore disc structure. All findings from the trial were statistically better for those receiving [stem cells](#) versus those in control groups.

"Currently there is no adequate treatment for discogenic [low back pain](#)," says Beckworth. "Both conservative and surgical treatments fall short. These positive results pave the way for a phase III study that may be starting later this year."

Provided by Emory University

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