

# Provocative discography may up risk of clinical disc problems

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(HealthDay)—Provocative discography, an invasive diagnostic

procedure involving disc puncture with pressurization, is associated with increased risk of clinical disc problems, according to a study published in the March issue of *The Spine Journal*.

Jason M. Cuellar, M.D., Ph.D., from the Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, and colleagues examined the clinical effects of lumbar provocative discography in a prospective, 10-year matched [cohort study](#). Seventy-five patients without current low-back pain problems were recruited; a closely matched control cohort was simultaneously recruited to undergo a similar evaluation. Participants were followed by serial protocol evaluations at one, two, five, and 10 years after enrollment.

The researchers found that 71 discography and 72 control subjects completed baseline evaluation, and 57 and 53, respectively, completed all interval surveillance assessments. There were 16 and four lumbar surgeries in the discography and control groups, respectively. The discography group also more frequently had medical visits, computed tomography/magnetic resonance imaging, work loss, and prolonged back pain episodes compared with controls.

"The disc puncture and pressurized injection performed during provocative discography can increase the risk of clinical disc problems in exposed patients," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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