

# Injectable tissue provides significant, long-term relief for chronic back pain, finds research

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A minimally invasive treatment that injects allograft disk tissue into the spine to relieve pain associated with degenerative disk disease provides

significant improvement in pain and function over a sustained period, according to new research to be presented at the [Society of Interventional Radiology Annual Scientific Meeting](#) in Phoenix, March 4–9.

The treatment, known as viable disk allograft supplementation, injects specialized cells and fluid into a patient's damaged disk. The cells of the injected fluid encourage the cells in the damaged disk to regenerate with healthy tissue.

"The significant improvement in [pain](#) and function is promising for [patients](#) living with [chronic low back pain](#)—a condition that can greatly impact a person's quality of life," said lead author Douglas Beall, M.D., FSIR, chief of radiology at Clinical Radiology of Oklahoma. "Back pain is the leading cause of limited activity and workplace absenteeism. This treatment may help patients return to a normal activity level for a longer period time."

Fifty patients at nine sites participated in this three-year voluntary extension of the randomized control Viable Allograft Supplemented Disk Regeneration in the Treatment of Patients With Low Back Pain (VAST) Trial, with 46 receiving allograft treatment and four receiving saline. The treatment group was similar to the patient population at the start of the trial in age, sex, race, ethnicity, [body mass index](#) and smoking status. Pain levels were evaluated using the VAS Analog Scale and functionality was measured using the Oswestery Disability Index (ODI).

Sixty percent of patients who received allograft treatment for chronic [low back pain](#) reported a greater than 50% improvement in pain and 70% of patients reported more than a 20-point improvement in their ODI scores. There were no persistent adverse events reported.

Degenerative disk disease is the leading cause of chronic low back pain, one of the world's most common medical conditions. It occurs when the disks that cushion the spine's vertebra begin to wear away. Because the disks help to facilitate movement and flexibility, the condition leads to pain and reduced functionality.

"Existing treatment for chronic low back pain due to degenerative disk disease is often ineffective or the effects are short-lived," said Beall.

"We need better treatments for this condition since conservative care is not providing the long-term outcomes that patients deserve. Injectable allograft treatment might be the answer for many people."

Use of allograft could even help decrease opioid use among patients with chronic low back pain, researchers said, which would be especially meaningful for younger patients who have years of function and quality of life to look forward to.

The treatment requires no incisions and patients are able to go home on the same day. VIVIEX Biologics, Inc. sponsored this study and Dr. Beall serves as a medical consultant for them.

**More information:** Viable disc allograft supplementation in patients with chronic low back pain (VAST Trial): Interim 36-month results of an open-label extension study. Society of Interventional Radiology Annual Scientific Meeting, March 4–9, 2023.

Provided by The Reis Group

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