

Sports Medicine
Sports Performance
Spine
Shoulder
Rehabilitation
Pediatric Sports Medicine
Knee
Joint Replacement & Arthritis
Hip
Hand, Wrist & Elbow
Foot & Ankle
Concussion Management



At Methodist Sports Medicine / The Orthopedic Specialists, we are committed to providing the highest level of care to patients suffering from pain, numbness or weakness anywhere from the neck to the lower back.

Among the many treatment options available to you, we specialize in spine surgery and deformity reconstruction.

Our facility also houses a physical therapy center fully equipped and staffed by a team of licensed therapists specializing in the care of spinal disorders.

To put lower back and neck pain behind you, turn to the experts at Methodist Sports Medicine / The Orthopedic Specialists.



Injuries/Conditions

The most common problems of the spine involve the degeneration of the discs (the cushions between the vertebrae).

As people age, the discs dry out, becoming less of a cushion over time, and this condition is most common in the neck and the lower back.

As this process develops, it doesn't provide shock absorption and the spinal segment degenerates. This initiates the whole process of arthritis with stiffness, pain, swelling and bone spur formation. Discs may also rupture as they wear out.

Bone spurs or herniated discs frequently cause the need for surgery because they put pressure on nerves and pinch the nerves that come out of your neck or lower back.

These nerves travel either down your arms or legs, and when they get pinched, there is often a surgical need to go in and "un-pinch" them.

These pinched nerves commonly refer pain to other areas of your body such as your arms, buttocks or legs. For example, knee pain may not be coming from your knee at all; rather, it could be coming from a pinched nerve in your back.

Treatments

Aside from pressure on nerves or unstable areas in the spine, most injuries in the neck and back can be treated non-operatively.

Treatment often involves temporarily stabilizing with a brace or activity modification until your body can heal the injury. It may also incorporate the short-term use of medicines to treat any symptoms that arise.

Some patients are candidates for Lateral Access Spine Surgery, a minimally invasive approach, which does not require dissection or retraction

of the sensitive back muscles, bones, ligaments or nerves, and allows for more complete disc removal and implant insertion as compared with traditional posterior procedures. In addition, lateral access doesn't require the exposure of the delicate abdominal muscles or present the same risk of vascular injury as traditional anterior approaches. As a result, operating time is often reduced, patient blood loss is minimized, and recovery time is significantly shorter.

There are a fair number of different types of fractures – especially the higher energy fractures in car accidents and falls – where part of the spinal column is injured or fractured and surgical reconstruction is needed.

Prevention

General healthy living is the best way to avoid back and neck problems. Obesity and smoking are especially important factors, and here's why:

The more weight you carry in your core, the harder your back muscles have to work to keep you in an upright position.

By the end of the day, those muscles fatigue, and the degenerative process speeds up. This can lead to wear and tear in the discs and arthritis in the joints of the spine.

Smoking is also related to the acceleration of early disc degeneration.

The positive news is that back pain is common and fleeting. Almost 90 percent of the population experiences significant back pain at some point during their lives, but in most cases it is only temporary.

For more information, call Methodist Sports Medicine / The Orthopedic Specialists at **317.817.1200** or visit methodistsports.com.

