Patient Guide to **Spondylolisthesis**

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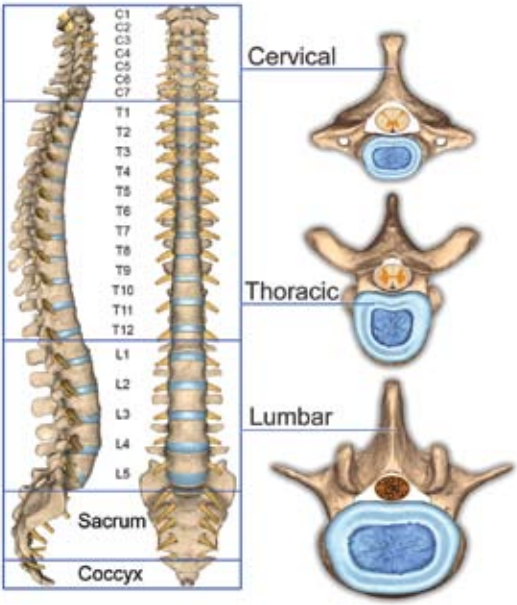
Spondylolisthesis

Description:

Spondylolisthesis is defined as a slip of one vertebral body relative to an adjacent vertebral body. This spinal condition most commonly presents as a degenerative disease in adults but may be pesent in adolescents as a result of deformity or trauma.

Often there is mild to moderate back pain. If the slip is compressing a nerve, leg pain often develops.

Spine Anatomy:

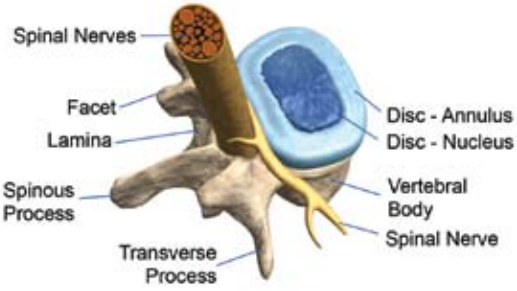


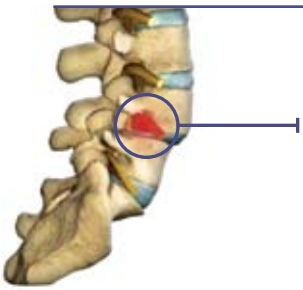
Symptoms:

A change in the position of the vertebra can lead to back pain. Nerve compression may occur as the condition worsens, resulting in leg pain.

- Lower back pain
- Leg pain and numbness may develop if there is nerve compression

Disc Anatomy:





Compressed Nerve

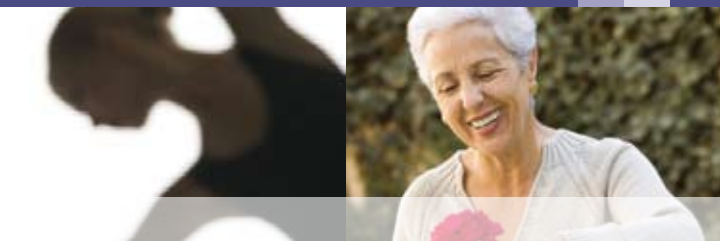
Causes:

Adults

- Arthritic changes
- Disc degeneration
- Pars defect

Adolescents

- Trauma due to athletic activities
- Congenital deformity
- Isthmic Spondylolisthesis



Possible Treatment Options

Non Operative Treatment

Medications, physical therapy or spinal cortisone injections are indicated for pain relief. Surgery can be considered for those who do not improve.

Decompression

This procedure involves removing all or a portion of the lamina, removing bone spurs and/or enlarging the foramen to relieve pressure on the nerve roots or spinal cord. This pressure is often the source of pain.

Posterolateral Fusion

Usually , in addition to a decompression, your surgeon will also perform an instrumented posterolateral fusion by inserting a series of rods and screws coupled with the placement of bone graft. This fusion provides increased spinal stability. Depending on the severity of the slip and degree of malalignment, the slipped vertebral body is sometimes pulled back to its original position using special instrumentation.

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Patient education is important prior to any surgery. A patient who is well informed of their spinal surgery procedure, and has an understanding of what to expect, is more likely to be satisfied with their clinical outcome. To assist the patient in their patient education, Stryker has provided this educational brochure as a companion to the patient education website: http://www.understandspinesurgery.com. This brochure was created to inform on a very basic level and any instrumentation shown is meant to be illustrative of spinal instrumentation in a generic sense and does not endorse any particular system over another.

The information presented in this brochure is for educational purposes only. Stryker is not dispensing medical advice. Please speak to your doctor to decide if spinal surgery is right for you. Only your doctor can make the medical judgment regarding which products and treatments are right for your own individual condition.

As with any surgery, spinal procedures carry certain risks. Your surgeon will explain all the possible complications of the surgery, as well as side effects. Each spinal surgery patient will experience a different post-operative activity level, depending upon their own individual clinical factors. Your doctor will help counsel you about how to best maintain your activities in order to recover properly from your surgery. Such activities include not engaging in high-impact activities that could de-stabilize any instrumentation that may have been implanted.

7/07