

Back Surgery...Or Not?

So many individuals suffer from chronic low back pain. Its the number one reason Americans miss work.

Back pain can either come on slow and get worse, or all at once you wake to find you cant get out of bed. It's like a lightning strike out of the blue. Either way its a nasty thing to cope with. When after a couple of days or a couple of weeks at tops, most people end up going to the doctor.

Upon going to the doctor, a lot of the people hurting with low back pain are told by their doctor that back surgery is required to fix your back pain. This news alone can be devastating.

Back surgery requires recovery time that most people can't afford to take from work. Back surgery also is very expensive with the average lumbar back surgery costing \$62,000! Not only does it take time to recover and is very expensive, many times its not even necessary.

So many people have low back surgery when other alternatives could have been used. Some of the other methods dealing with back pain can be physical therapy, biofeedback, traction, exercise, steroid injections, and electric stimulation therapy of muscles and nerves just to name a few.

People that rush into back surgery have found that their back pain is actually worse than it did before the surgery. Some people also need follow up surgery either to correct mistakes made in the initial surgery, or problems in the back that occur later.

Needless to say, this can be devastating. By this time, the patient has been out of work for so long, that a financial hardship has occurred, medical bills have piled up, or some people have lost their employment, and to make matters worse, their back pain is no better or even worse.

People needlessly put themselves in this situation. I blame this on a few things. Physicians are quick to suggest back surgery for the simple reason they do not believe in treating people with pain medication. Some doctores are more worried about writing prescriptions for pain medication, then the pain your suffering from.

This is due to patients abusing the system when it comes to prescription drugs, or lack of knowledge the physician has towards chronic pain sufferers. Either way the true chronic pain patient suffers tremendously. It has been reported that chronic pain sufferers will not abuse pain medication unless they have an addictive personality. That is about 5% or less of pain medication patients.

When it comes to your back, going under the knife should always be the last resort. Everything under the sun should be tried, and tried again before anyone should have surgery. There are a few exceptions when having back surgery is necessary, but for the most part, other measures and therapies are available and should be used. As a low back pain sufferer myself, though I'm not a medical doctor, I would suggest something like this.

First find a doctor who believes treating pain with pain medication. Combining physical therapy and stretching with pain medication can relieve pain tremendously. Do physical activities such as stretching, walking, sit-ups if possible, thus strengthening the muscles around the disc, taking the pressure off the nerves that cause such pain.

A good program of pain medicine combined with other pain management tactics can do wonders over a period of time. A lot of people have found that the pain has actually gone away with this type of therapy.

It's preferable to having an aching back compared to the many complications, severe pain, permanent nerve damage, loss of physical mobility, being unable to work, and even becoming disabled due to having low back surgery.

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About the Author

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