

Timely Intervention

An accurate diagnosis with timely intervention by an experienced spine physician reduces the risk for development of chronic pain and permanent physical impairment. Abnormal spinal segment mobility and compromising loads increase the risk for injury and the potential for neurological compromise. Severe or long-standing nerve injury can lead to permanent muscle weakness, chronic pain, and in some cases, impairment of bowel and bladder function.

Locating Members of Your Spinecare Team

The AASP is aware that when searching for healthcare professionals, the list is seemingly endless making it difficult to discover which one is right for you. The AASP offers online National Directories to aide you in your search. These directories list healthcare professionals by specialty and geographic location. In order to be placed on these directories, all healthcare professionals have elected to abide by the AASP's code of ethics concerning conservative and cooperative spinecare. Utilizing these directories will allow you to narrow and refine your search. As with choosing any professional service, the AASP recommends that you contact the healthcare professional directly to ensure their philosophy and standard of patient care meets with your personal requirements.

To begin your search, go to www.spinephysicians.net



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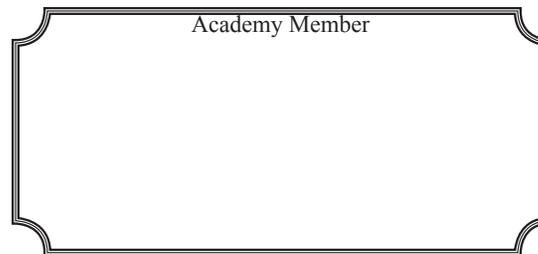
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National Spinecare Awareness Campaign

WHY COOPERATIVE
SPINECARE?

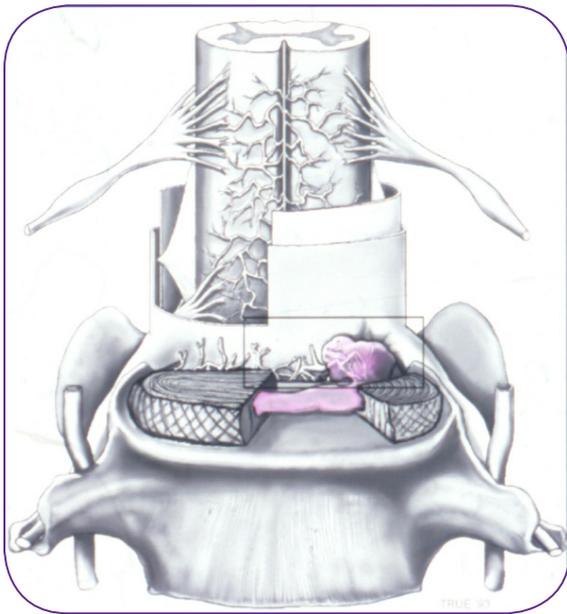


The American Academy of Spine Physicians

*An Organization of Healthcare Professionals Dedicated to
Excellence in Spinecare.*

Your Spine: Intricate and Complex

The spinal column is an engineering marvel which provides support for the entire musculoskeletal system. It protects the spinal cord and spinal nerves and serves as an elaborate sensory system. The intricate spine is comprised of 25 vertebrae, over 100 elaborate joints, 23 intervertebral discs, more than 220 specialized ligaments, and an intricate network of blood vessels and countless specialized nerve endings.



What is Cooperative Spinecare?

Cooperative spinecare refers to two or more healthcare professionals who work together to preserve or restore spinal health while prioritizing the patient's well being.

Who May Benefit by Cooperative Spinecare?

The patient with persistent or progressive pain, numbness, muscle weakness or abnormal spinal movement who is not recovering as expected may require a multidisciplinary approach. This offers combined expertise to help maximize potential recovery. The potential benefits of cooperative spinecare include timely diagnosis, appropriate intervention, a broader range of therapeutic options, continuity of care and improved potential for recovery.

The American Academy of Spine Physicians

The American Academy of Spine Physicians (AASP) is an organization founded by neurosurgeons and chiropractic physicians dedicated to conservative and cooperative spinecare. The AASP is an advocate of patient rights, particularly the patient's right to choose available care after being properly informed of their condition and of reasonable therapeutic options. To this end, membership has been expanded to include all members of the spinecare team. Patients and physicians alike will benefit from the open dialogue between specialties with the end result being more effective spinecare with an increased rate of favorable outcomes.

Common Ground

Spine Physicians (i.e. neurosurgeons, chiropractic physicians, and orthopedic surgeons), have extensive training in spinal anatomy, spinal biomechanics, diseases of the spine and neurology as it relates to the spine. Most can perform or order the necessary procedures to diagnose spine and related conditions. Due to the length of the spine, an individual may have varying degrees of degenerative changes occurring at different levels of the spine, thus requiring a multi-disciplinary approach.

Common examples of spine conditions which may coexist, include degenerative disc disease, back/neck pain, disc herniation, arthritic disease, abnormal spinal joint movement and radiculopathy. The spine physician cares for many of the same degenerative spinal disorders at different ends of the disease spectrum.

Spectrum of Spine Disease

Early-stage spine disease is often best addressed by a spine physician specializing in non-operative care such as a chiropractic physician, whereas late-stage spine disease involving progressive neurological compromise may require the attention of a surgeon. Intermediate stages of spinal disease may require a cooperative effort between all disciplines of spinecare.



Spine physicians, in conjunction with other healthcare professionals, strive to protect and restore biomechanical and neurological integrity of the spine through timely diagnosis, appropriate intervention, patient education and through the prevention of unnecessary surgery.