Lumbar Provocative Discogram

WHAT IS A PROVOCATIVE DISCOGRAM?

Lumbar provocative discography, also called discography or discogram, helps your physician discover the source of your back pain. It identifies the disc or discs in the spine that appear abnormal and are painful. Then, your doctor can determine if surgery or another type of pain management is needed to help relieve your back pain. A lumbar provocative discogram is the first step in completing a Laser Microdiscectomy and must be completed prior to proceeding with a Laser Microdiscectomy.

HOW DOES A PROVOCATIVE DISCOGRAPHY WORK?

This procedure requires you to rate your pain during the procedure, so you will not be sleeping during it. Here are the common steps for a provocative discography.

- Numbing medicine is applied to decrease the amount of pain felt during this procedure.
- A discogram needle enters the body and into the center of the disc.
- Then, a contrast dye is injected.
- The doctor will ask you to rate your pain and whether it corresponds with your normal area of pain.
- Next, an X-ray Fluoroscopy is used to see how the dye spreads.
- If the dye spreads outside of the disc and it reproduces your pain, it could be the source of your pain.

When to Call the Doctor after Discography

Your discogram will be done as an outpatient procedure, meaning that you will be sent home after the procedure. It is normal to have some pain for several hours and up to a day or two at the injection sites. For the first 24 hours after this procedure, avoid strenuous activity. You may return to all normal activity 24 hours following this procedure. You should immediately call your doctor if you experience severe, debilitating back pain, back pain that worsens or a high fever within the next couple of weeks.