



DISCOGRAPHY

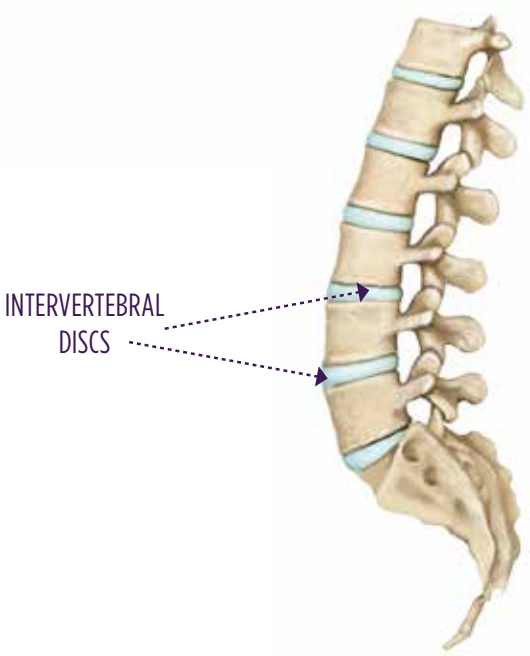
*Understand your condition.
Know your next steps.*

Introduction

Sometimes a physician may recommend a diagnostic procedure called a discogram (picture of the disc) or discography (study of the disc). This test may be necessary to learn more about the internal structure of the disc itself and its relationship to a patient's symptoms.

The purpose of discography

In situations where physical examination, history, and other diagnostic studies suggest disc disease, this study can be helpful in determining if the disc(s) is the source of the pain. This study is reserved for patients who have not done well with traditional and conservative treatment, and for them the possibility of surgery is being considered because of the magnitude of persisting pain.



LUMBAR SPINE & SACRUM

DISCOGRAPHY

How should I prepare?

- » Please shower/bathe with antibacterial soap, if possible, the evening before the discography.
- » While the procedure usually takes less than an hour, you will need to allow for at least 2 to 3 hours at the surgery center and for a possible CT scan.
- » If you are taking prescription blood thinners such as Coumadin (warfarin), Ticlid (ticlopidine), or Plavix (clopidogrel bisulfate), please inform your doctor's patient care coordinator. These medications will need to be stopped before the procedure, *but only after you receive permission from the doctor who is prescribing these medications.*
- » Please inform us if you have any allergies, since medications and dye will be administered before and during the procedure.
- » If you develop a fever, night sweats, or an active infection, your procedure will need to be rescheduled. Please contact our office at (651) 968-5201 immediately to inform us of your change in condition.

The procedure

Prior to the procedure, an IV is placed in the arm for intravenous antibiotics and mild sedation over the course of the procedure. For lumbar discography, the patient is placed on the table lying face down with a pillow underneath the abdomen. For cervical discography, the patient lies face up with a pillow under the neck.

The skin is sterilely prepared, and using fluoroscopic (X-ray) guidance, the safest path into the appropriate disc(s) is determined. The skin is anesthetized and a thin needle is advanced under fluoroscopic guidance into the central portion of each disc to be tested. During the actual discogram, a small volume of contrast solution is injected into the disc to better determine the internal structure of the disc, as well as to pressurize the disc to levels that would be experienced in normal activities of daily living. The physician will ask you questions during the procedure to try to diagnose whether your pain is related to your disc. Often a postdiscography CT scan is performed.

IF YOUR PROCEDURE INCLUDES SEDATION

- » You should have no solid foods for 6 hours before your procedure.
- » You may have clear liquids up to 2 hours before your procedure. Examples include: water, broth, clear fruit juices such as apple, cranberry, and grape juice. These juices should not include pulp. Tea, black coffee with *no cream*, and carbonated beverages are also allowed.
- » Nothing by mouth, including throat lozenges, mints, and all hard candy.
- » No gum for 2 hours before your procedure.
- » You must have a responsible adult arrive with you to our facility. If you use a taxi or volunteer ride service, you still must have a responsible adult with you in order to help take care of you after your sedation procedure.
- » Please take your regular medications the day of your procedure, especially any **heart or blood pressure medications**.
- » If you are on medication for **diabetes**, be sure to take it the day of the procedure.

For expert advice on how to stay healthy and active, visit summitortho.com.

APPOINTMENTS (651) 968-5201

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After the injection

- » Plan to rest for the remainder of the day. Resume activity as tolerated.
- » For discomfort, apply ice packs to the area for 15 minutes several times a day.
- » Do not soak in a tub for 24 hours after the procedure. You may take showers.
- » Observe for any signs of infection, including redness and warmth at the injection site, increasing pain, swelling, drainage, chills, night sweats, or fever above 100° F. Report any signs of infection or other unusual symptoms you may have.

Potential risks of discography

Increased pain and muscle spasms can occur after discography. This study is considered invasive and does have potential risks. These include, but are not limited to:

- » A risk of infection in the disc. This is uncommon because strict sterile techniques are used in the procedure.
- » A slight risk of nerve injury.
- » A slight risk of bleeding.
- » Allergic reactions to any of the medications or contrast dye used. (Be sure to inform us before the procedure if you have any known allergies.)
- » For *cervical discography only*, there is a slight risk of esophageal puncture.

CAUTION

Driving while sedated is illegal and can result in serious accidents. Please be sure to use your driver to get you home safely! If using medical transportation or a taxi, another responsible party must accompany you.

