



How Long is Recovery?

Many patients have the procedure done as an outpatient. People are observed in the recovery area for one to three hours after surgery and most people can resume their regular activities soon after the procedure.

Contributing to the Community's Health

Frequently people inquire as to how they may make a contribution to the community's health. We encourage you to consider Glendale Adventist Medical Center's Healthcare Foundation whenever you or your family desire to make a difference in the health of our community. For more information, please call (818) 409-8055.

Physician Referral (818)409-8100

SPINE SERVICES

PERCUTANEOUS VERTEBROPLASTY

HEALTH CONNECTIONS

Understanding Percutaneous Vertebroplasty

*at Glendale Adventist
Medical Center*



Percutaneous vertebroplasty is a treatment for people with spinal compression fractures.

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What Is Percutaneous Vertebroplasty?

Percutaneous vertebroplasty is a treatment for people with compression fractures of the spine. The procedure involves the injection of a special cement into damaged vertebra. The cement hardens and stabilizes the vertebra, preventing further collapse, and may reduce the pain caused by bone rubbing against bone. Patients can resume their activities almost immediately. Previously, the only treatment available to most people with this problem was extended bed rest and pain medications.

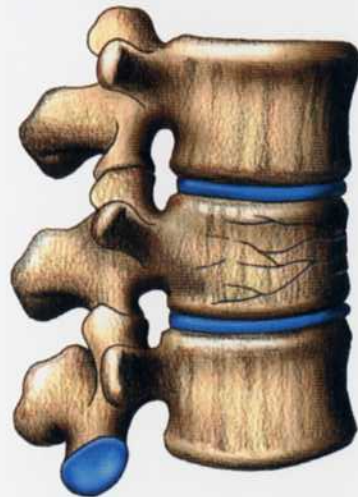
What Causes Compression Fractures of the Spine?

Compression fractures of the vertebrae are most often the result of osteoporosis. The National Osteoporosis Foundation estimates that ten million Americans have osteoporosis, and the disease causes 700,000 vertebral fractures annually. The majority of fractures occur in women. In addition, younger people can also suffer these fractures as the result of weakened bones from the long-term use of steroids used to treat diseases such as asthma, lupus and rheumatoid arthritis. Sometimes the bone becomes so weak and brittle that a fracture may occur by simply coughing or rolling out of bed.

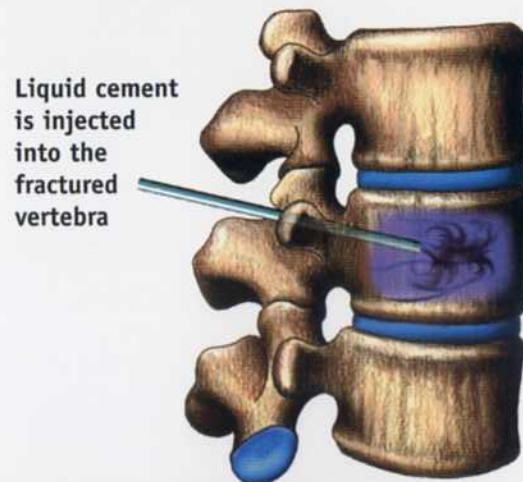
Regardless of the cause, a compression fracture of the spine may result in greatly limited activity, severe pain and a tremendous reduction in the quality of life.

Who Can Benefit From Vertebroplasty?

The best candidates for the procedure are those people who have recently suffered a compression fracture, and are having moderate to severe back pain. Older fractures can be treated, but it is more likely to be effective when it is performed soon after the fracture occurs. Vertebroplasty is not usually helpful for chronic back pain or disc problems.



Vertebra with compression fracture



Liquid cement is injected into the fractured vertebra

How Is Percutaneous Vertebroplasty Performed?

Percutaneous literally means "performed through the skin." Using x-ray imaging as a guide, the doctor inserts a needle into the damaged vertebra. The liquid cement, which has the consistency of toothpaste, is then injected through the needle and into the bone. Once it hardens, it should stabilize the fractured vertebra. Patients report pain relief 4 to 24 hours after the procedure. More than one fractured vertebrae can be treated at a time. Vertebroplasty can be performed with a local anesthetic or under general anesthesia.

What Is the Success Rate, And Are There Side Effects?

Vertebroplasty can be successful at relieving pain – in fact, some studies have shown that 75-90% of patients report either complete relief or significant reductions of their pain.

Complications are low, but as with any medical procedure, you need to discuss these possibilities with your doctor.