

## **Interspinous Spacers.**

### **Who needs them?**

This device is used to treat lumbar canal stenosis at one or two levels. Patients with this condition typically complain of leg and/or back pain on walking or standing. It is a condition which usually comes on in later life, presenting commonly in patients in their late 60s onwards.

### **Pre operative advice.**

Please **bring your scans with you.**

On the day of surgery, please remain Nil By Mouth. Do not eat past midnight the night before, but you may continue to drink water up until 2 hours before your admission.

Please avoid smoking on the day of your surgery.

Please shower or bathe as normal in the morning, and remove any make up or nail polish.

### **How is it inserted?**



The procedure can be performed under local anaesthesia with sedation. This is a drug injected into a vein (usually in the hand) following which you will sleep through the operation. This typically takes less than half an hour. The patient is usually asked to lie



on their front or side during the operation. A small incision is made at the affected area and the tissues are protected. This allows the insertion of the device into the space between the spinous processes (bones you can feel along your back) in such a manner so as to distract them by the desired amount. The wound is then closed, usually with dissolvable stitches.

### **Post operative advice.**

Following your procedure, you will spend a small amount of time in theatre recovery, before being transferred back to your room.

You may spend approximately 3 hours in the unit before discharge, you will have something to eat and drink here. Following a sedation or light anaesthetic, you should not drive. You may go home on public transport, only if somebody collects you and stay at home with you for the first 24 hours.

Please ensure that you drink plenty of fluids and eat a light diet.

It is also advised that you don't do the following:

- Drive or Operate machinery. This includes a kettle and cooker.
- Drink any alcohol.
- Make any important decisions, the sedation may stay in your system for around 24 hours and may cloud your logic and judgement.
- Take sleeping tablets, or any medications that make you sleepy (Piriton for example.)

You will have a small wound following your procedure. Nurses on the ward will offer you some post operative care for this. Your practice nurse (at your GP surgery) will be able to assess your wound and change dressings if you wish. You may wish to protect the wound for a few weeks, as jeans or other trousers (especially with belts) may rub on the site. Some people need to wear a lumbar support for 2- 4 weeks after this operation, which is determined by the initial scans.

After discharge, you may need some pain killers. You may feel some discomfort around the area for around 7-14 days. This is quite normal.

### **What are the risks?**

There is roughly a one in seven chance that it will not adequately distract the bones and therefore the symptoms will persist. This may require re-operation. There is a risk of infection, which is low and, if the bones are too weak, the risk that the procedure may have to be abandoned if the bone tends to give way.

### **Contact us.**

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These contact numbers will be available to you between the hours of 9-5, Monday to Friday. If you have any concerns out of hours, please don't hesitate to contact the ward at The London Clinic, or your GP. If you need any urgent care, please visit your local Accident and Emergency.