

Comparative Clinical Effectiveness of Nonsurgical Treatment Methods in Patients with Lumbar Spinal Stenosis

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Lumbar spinal stenosis (central canal or lateral recess) is the number one reason for adults to have spine surgery. While the research supporting this aggressive treatment isn't very strong (in the absence of red flags); there has also been an evidence gap in our understanding of nonsurgical options, until now.

This new randomized clinical trial evaluated hundreds of patients dealing with lumbar stenosis. Like we see in practice, they were dealing with pain, the inability to walk substantial distances, and significant decreases in their quality of life.

This research paper found improvement in both the Swiss Spinal Stenosis Questionnaire and the self-paced walking test for the patients who experience manual therapy as part of their treatment program.

Similar to the researchers, we have found mobilization, stretching, and spinal stabilization exercises very effective at helping patients with lumbar spinal stenosis achieve improvement and a better overall quality of life.

"Lumbar spinal stenosis accounts for the fastest growth in lumbar surgery in older adults in the United States. The rate of complex fusion procedures for this condition has increased by 137% between 1998 and 2008."

"Mounting concern about the rising states of spine surgery and opioid use in older adults makes a compelling case for the dissemination of new evidence about safe and effective nonsurgical and non-opioid pharmacological treatment options for LSS."

"It appears that the chiropractic/physical therapy intervention had better short-term outcomes at 2 months..."

