



## **Spinal Health Managing Expectations in The Surgical Clinic**

Back pain is one of the most common complaints in the world affecting nearly 85% of the population during their lifetime. There are multiple causes for back pain. It is the goal of Logan Health Neuroscience clinics to find the cause or “pain generator” and to help determine if interventional treatment (non-surgical options) or surgical intervention is best for the patient.

Our hope is that patients and referring providers can understand that most back pain is a group of symptoms which occur together, rather than one distinct cause. There is a difference between patients with back pain symptoms and ones that can be definitively treated with surgery.

Often, it takes a group of clinical providers working together in the management of back pain. This can include physical therapy, physical medicine & rehabilitation, massage therapy, acupuncture, osteopathic manipulative medicine, chiropractic medicine, interventional pain medicine, orthopedic spine, mental/behavioral health, and neurological surgery to name a few.

Of patients presenting with back pain for longer than 6 weeks, only 5 out of 100 have surgically treatable issues. Surgery is generally offered to patient for whom a pain generator has been well defined. Even then, approximately 10% of patients do not get better after a surgical intervention.

Spinal Surgery is focused on 3 primary interventions, decompression, fusion, and decompression with fusion. Utilizing these interventions leads to creating the most optimal environment for nerve regeneration (healing) and the stabilization of the mechanical aspects of the spine. Surgery does not fix the nerve, rather it creates a better environment for the nerve to heal by removing compression around the nerve. Nerve regeneration can take up to 2 ½ years to fully heal. In approximately 10% of cases the nerve does not heal and results in chronic nerve pain.

Recovery after surgery is a two-stage process: 1. Nerve Regeneration, 2. Muscle Recovery. When the nerve root is injured, there can be change in the muscles around that nerve. If the nerves are damaged enough, the muscle can become weaker and can lead to discomfort. All of this means that you can have nerve and muscle pain after surgery, especially during the first 3-4 months.

The bottom line is that it takes time to recover. It is a process, not an event. Surgery is the event that kicks off the recovery process. Please be patient, recovery is a very individual process being influenced by several independent factors such as the extent of the injury, age of the injury, age of the patient, and the extent and complexity of the procedure.

Logan Health has advanced and comprehensive services, facilities, and specialty trained clinics to provide diagnostic, interventional, surgical and recovery care for your spine health condition.