

# PAIN MANAGEMENT

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## TREATING BACK PAIN

Back pain is as much a part of the human condition as the common cold. In fact, eight out of ten adults will experience an acute episode of back pain at some point in their lifetime. Back pain is the second most common cause of missed work-days due to illness and the most common cause of disability.

While most episodes of back pain are self-limited, 5% to 10% of cases will become

chronic. These chronic conditions account for 90% of the healthcare expenditures for back pain and amount to \$50 to \$80 billion dollars annually.

Back pain can be almost as frustrating for a physician to treat as it is for the patient who suffers from it. The key to appropriate treatment is to identify the generator of the pain. There are five common generators of low back pain: discogenic, neu-

ropathic, arthropathic, musculoskeletal, and psychogenic. One or a combination of these generators may be the source of back pain. Identification of back pain is often possible only by correlating a combination of history and physical examination, diagnostic images, lab and electrodiagnostic studies, and diagnostic injection blocks such a facet and nerve blocks. Once the generator is identified the appropriate treatment

### Special points of interest:

- Quick Appointment times for:
- Consultations
- Epidural Steroid Injections
- Facet Injections
- Discograms
- Nerve Blocks
- Sacroiliac Injections
- Radiofrequency Neural Ablation
- In office procedure room with fluoroscope and radiofrequency pulse generator.
- Physical Therapy

## MEET DR LISA MANCUSO

Dr. Lisa Mancuso is a New Jersey native who earned a Bachelors degree in Mechanical Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. As an engineer she successfully completed Naval Nu-

clear Power School. She earned her M.D. degree at the Medical College of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and completed an anesthesiology residency in Pittsburgh. She recently finished an interventional

pain management fellowship at West Virginia University and practices multidisciplinary chronic pain management at FirstChoice Healthcare in Florence.



## TREATING BACK PAIN CONTINUED

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A common example of the difficulty in back pain diagnosis is a patients whose x-ray and MRIs show no apparent explanation for their symptoms, many patients with back pain may have normal or near normal MRIs. For example, torn discs do not consistently show as abnormalities on MRIs (only 12-13% of annular tears show up on MRI). Patients with low back pain



L4 Disc Herniation Demonstrated on Lumbar MRI

without impressive MRI findings are the most challenging to diagnose and treat. For those patients

without neurological compromise (such as new bowel or bladder incontinence), there are a multitude of nonsurgical options available to identify

and manage chronic back pain. This comprehensive approach addresses the diagnosis and treatment of the pain generator and includes nerve blocks, physical therapy, medications, and psychological therapy if appropriate. A referral to a multidisciplinary pain center is your most effective option to sort through these diagnoses and provide the most comprehensive and cost effective treatment available for the management of chronic back pain.

## EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTION FOR BACK PAIN

Epidural steroid injections can be administered in the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spines. The indication is acute or chronic pain of documented or suspected spinal pathology, such as herniated discs, bulging discs, facet arthropathy, and spinal stenosis. Epidural steroid injections can have diagnostic as well as therapeutic value. Because the epidural space is contiguous anatomically with so many structures within the spine, an epidural steroid injection is often the initial intervention in acute or chronic back pain.

Under fluoroscopic guidance a needle is advanced into the epidural space and steroid is injected. A local anesthetic is often injected into the epidural space as well, which buys some time for the steroid to become effective. The epidural space can be approached in a few different ways, interlaminar, transforaminal, and caudal. For suspected or documented radiculopathy transforaminal epidural steroid injections allow more localized placement of medicine corresponding to the level(s) of radiculopathy and is also useful for patients with scar tissue from prior laminectomies.

## FIRSTCHOICE HEALTHCARE

Firstchoice Healthcare PC Is a multispecialty pain clinic that uses an interdisciplinary approach to the diagnosis and treatment of both acute and chronic pain . Our goal is to manage a patients pain through physical modalities and interventional techniques so as to lower or eliminate the need for narcotic medications while improving the

patient's ability to function at home and in the workforce. Our office is equipped with latest advanced equipment for interventional pain techniques. Since our office has a procedure room with fluoroscope and radiofrequency pulse generator, we are able see pain patients for procedures quicker and less expensively than in a hospital setting. If you have



Fluoroscope OCE 7700

a patient that is in need of pain management, simply call our office to schedule the appointment and we will take care of the rest. We understand the demand put on a physicians office thus we will make taking your referral as simple for you as possible. Call today 843-678-9777.