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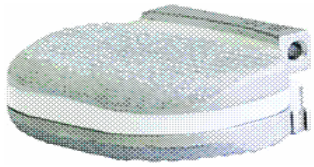
Patients See Future of Spine Surgery

Educational event teaches about cervical and lumbar artificial disc replacements

On January 9, 2005, 42 people from five states braved driving rain and snow storms to hear noted spine surgeon, John Regan, M.D. address a Spine Patients' Symposium hosted by Global Patient Network (GPN). Dr. Regan is Director of the Cedars-Sinai Institute for Spinal Disorders and a principal investigator for the upcoming clinical trial of Cervitech's PCM Cervical Disc. He was also a principal investigator for the SB Charité III Lumbar Artificial Disc.



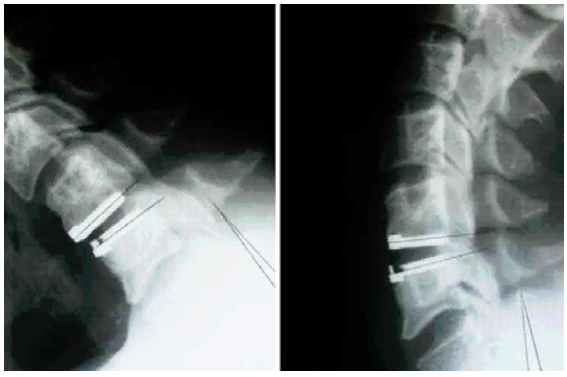
Cervitech's PCM Cervical Disc

The main topics for the Symposium were:

- **Cervical Artificial Disc Replacement (ADR): Where do we stand?**
- **Lumbar ADR: FDA clearance? What does that mean for the patients?**

Mark Mintzer, President and Founder of GPN, opened the proceedings with a discussion on "The Internet Patient" and the need for patients to educate themselves about their problems and options, take an active part in their treatment planning and make informed decisions. "We grew up in a world where we went to the doctor and he fixed us," Mintzer said. "Our spine problems are so profound; they are so difficult to diagnose, and our options are few. All too often, our doctors are limited in what they can offer. They don't always tell us what our options are. One doctor has a hammer, so everything looks like a nail. The next one has a screwdriver, so everything looks like a screw. If your problem is like a lock, you need a doctor with a key. The fact that you can open a lock with a hammer or a screwdriver doesn't make them reasonable options if you need to get through a door," says Mintzer. "Do your homework. Make informed decisions."

Cervical ADR is much newer than lumbar, and patients understand much less about it. After a detailed primer in the progression of cervical disc disease, Dr. Regan presented an overview of the state of the technology, discussing other discs already in clinical trials such as the Bryan



Single level PCM 15 months post-op

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"Seeing the new technology and successful patients was very encouraging."

- GPN Symposium Attendee

Patients See Future...

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and Prestige discs from Medtronic, as well as ProDisc-C from Synthes.

"FDA approved the clinical trial for the Cervitech PCM disc in December. Hopefully, patients will be enrolled in the study and surgeries will be performed within the next few weeks," Regan said. "Cervical disc replacement is strongly indicated for radiculopathy and myelopathy."

Padded lounges in the front, standing room in the back.

"Most attendees were here for information about the Charité and FDA clearance," said Mintzer. "We've all been watching for years. When Charité was cleared, the landscape changed. Patients are here to find out if they can do multi-level Charité procedures now. Will health insurance and Medicare cover ADR procedures? If I have adjacent level degeneration after lumbar fusion, am I a candidate?" Among attendees were four ADR recipients, including a 3-level and a patient who required a revision surgery, explanting a disc and replacing it. A 2-level Dynesys patient was there, as well as many fusion patients. As one attendee said, "We've got more hardware here than Home Depot."

As with the cervical portion of the program, Dr. Regan provided a detailed explanation of the progression of lumbar degenerative disc disease and other spinal disorders. He also showed a video of an actual surgery. "It was a bit much for a few of the attendees, but most were glad to have the opportunity to learn more about the procedure. The video clarified some issues that were previously too difficult to understand," said Mintzer.

Attendee Elena Burke, an RN from Wildomar, California, said, "Being in a room full of people with similar spine issues helps to validate many of the trials, tribulations and triumphs we experience as spine patients."

For more information, visit the GPN website at www.GlobalPatientNetwork.com.

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