



Keep your Spring!

The intervertebral disc is a very important piece of the spine that allows for normal range of motion, shock absorption, protection to the spinal cord, and space for the nervous system. Each disc sits between a vertebra to keep the spine connected and they have surrounding tissue that is dense holding the disc material inside. The inner part of the disc is squishy to allow for shock absorption and mobility.

When we evaluate a patient x-ray it is our primary source of information when looking at disc space. Now, on x-ray I can see the space in between the vertebrae, but I can't see the disc material. Another way to evaluate the disc is through MRI; which is able to view soft tissue more accurately. The x-ray will give me good information on the height and health of each disc.

As the disc breaks down over time it usually follows a couple of different stages. First, the vertebral end plates (Top or bottom of the vertebrae) starts to "cup" the disc. Think of it as two little hands cupping the disc in the middle. Then the next stage all of it starts to flatten out and become thinner. Finally, bone spurring usually occurs with a clear

indication there has been stress there for a while.

When reading a person's x-rays, I look for areas that have degenerated or are not at the same stage as other areas. This gives me a clue to how long the problem has been there and areas that are calling out for help so I can make a plan to rescue those areas. Now the disc space once lost does not usually come back very much. Sometimes we can gain back millimeters, which is huge in the spine, but that is all. The disc degeneration is not reversible.



So, the best way, in my opinion, is to have regular visits to maintain the health of the disc and spine. It even helps if this is started before issues arise, but usually we do not seek care unless there is a trigger. Keeping our spring between each vertebrae will allow for the spine to be more resilient throughout our lifetime.

This month's recipient of our giving back campaign is The Salvation Army which is a favorite of Debra L. and Jim R.

During the month of April all new patients will receive a full exam and any x-rays needed for \$55. All the proceeds will be donated to The Salvation Army. Please help spread the word so we can raise as much as possible.

Government funded insurance carriers not included.



Mission Statement:

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.



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