

INTRACEPT®

Vertebrogenic pain is a type of chronic low back pain that comes from the vertebral endplates—the thin layers of tissue that cover the top and bottom of each vertebral body and separate it from the disc. Over time, everyday use and disc degeneration can stress and damage these endplates. This can lead to inflammation and ongoing pain. The basivertebral nerve (BVN) runs inside the vertebra and carries these pain signals from the irritated endplates to the brain.

Disc problems and endplate problems can feel similar, but vertebrogenic pain is often identified on MRI by characteristic “Modic changes,” which show inflammation and changes in the bone near the endplates. Patients who respond well to Intracept often describe pain in the center of the lower back that worsens with activity, prolonged sitting, bending forward, or lifting.

How the Intracept® Procedure Works

The basivertebral nerve extends from the back of the vertebral body into the endplates. When the endplates are damaged and inflamed, nerve endings multiply, and the BVN sends stronger pain signals to the brain. Intracept® uses radiofrequency (heat) energy to carefully treat this nerve inside the bone. By disrupting the BVN’s ability to transmit pain signals, the procedure aims to reduce or relieve vertebrogenic low back pain at its source. It does not remove bone, change the overall structure of the spine, or involve hardware or implants.

What to Expect from the Procedure

Intracept® is a minimally invasive, implant-free procedure performed as a same-day outpatient treatment under anesthesia. A small instrument is guided into the vertebral body under imaging guidance, and radiofrequency energy is applied to the basivertebral nerve. The procedure typically takes about an hour. Because it is done through small access points and preserves normal spinal anatomy, patients go home the same day with a short initial recovery period.

Results and Duration of Pain Relief

Clinical studies have shown that many patients experience meaningful improvements in function and pain within a few months after Intracept®. For many,

these improvements are maintained over several years after a single treatment. Results can vary, and not every patient will have the same level of pain relief, but for appropriately selected patients, Intracept can be a long-lasting addition to their overall back pain treatment plan.

Results and Duration of Pain Relief

Intracept® may be considered for adults who:

- Have had chronic low back pain for at least six months
- Have tried conservative treatments (such as medications, physical therapy, injections, and activity modification) for at least six months without enough relief
- Have MRI findings showing Modic changes that match vertebrogenic pain (inflammation and damage at the vertebral endplates)

As with any medical procedure, there are risks, including infection, bleeding, or lack of improvement in symptoms. Your pain specialist will review your history, imaging, and prior treatments, and will discuss in detail the potential benefits, risks, and alternatives so you can decide together whether the Intracept® procedure is the right option for you.

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