Two pilot studies show that a new non-surgical spinal decompression treatment has a beneficial effect on lower back pain, and that it seems to benefit the morphology of the spine by increasing disc height. One study, authored by Dr. John Leslie of the Mayo Clinic and others, found that clinical use of a spinal decompression system led to an 88.9 percent reduction in pain scores over the course of six weeks, as well as improvement in Oswestry disability scores and a drop in consumption of pain medications.

In the other study, CT scans of the lumbar spine were taken of patients before and after treatment on a spinal decompression system. They showed possible beneficial anatomical changes associated with the treatment.

Dr. Christian Apfel, lead author and associate professor of anesthesiology and perioperative care at the University of California at San Francisco, says, "A significant reduction in chronic LBP [lower back pain] after non-invasive spinal decompression correlated with an increase in disc height." Control groups to determine the placebo effect and the extent of spontaneous improvement were not included in the Leslie study.

Thus, to gather definitive data on the effectiveness of a spinal decompression system, randomized, placebo-controlled, double-blind studies must be undertaken - and for longer periods of time. This study was partially funded by Axiom Worldwide. A similar controlled, randomized trial is called for to prove that an increase in disc height leads to pain amelioration.

**Question:** What is Spinal Decompression Therapy?

Spinal Decompression Therapy is a non-surgical, non-chiropractic therapy to relieve back pain and other problems associated with spinal disc injuries.

**Answer:** Bulging discs, herniated discs, degenerative disc disease, pinched nerves, sciatica, and arm pain or leg pain can often be attributed to your spine asserting pressure on your discs. Poor posture, bad body mechanics, repetitive stress and acute injury can cause your vertebrae to compress your discs or to slip out of alignment which then applies pressure to your discs.

Compressed discs lead to two major problems: a bulge or herniation pressing on a nerve; and brittleness of the disc. The problem is often perpetuated because the compressed disc restricts the flow of nutrients to itself which is needed to heal.

Traditional corrective treatments include surgery or chiropractic adjustment. Spinal Decompression Therapy is an alternative FDA approved treatment option that has shown very good results.

Spinal Decompression Treatment is non-invasive and provides gentle decompression of the disc through the use of a decompression table. You are strapped to the table so that as it moves it applies a distraction force to the targeted area of the spine (the compressed disc). A computer controls the distraction force which is applied in between periods of relaxation. This gently pulls the spine apart elongating it and creating a small vacuum between the vertebrae which pulls the disc back into shape.

Much like a repetitive stress injury the decompression works in very minute increments. But over time that adds up and lets the disc reshape itself, heal and get the proper flow of nutrients going to fight off brittleness and future injuries.

This FDA approved technology relieves pain by enlarging the space between the discs. The negative pressure of decompression releases pressure that builds on to the disc and nerves, allowing the herniated and bulging disc to eventually go back into normal position. Decompression is the only treatment that is truly most effective for severe cases of herniation, degeneration, arthritis, stenosis and pressure on the nerve root. According to a clinical study performed by the Orthopedic Technological Review in 2004, said that 86% of all cases experienced spinal pain relief with disc decompression.

**What is the difference between decompression and traction?**

Many clinicians specializing in lumbar spine pathology have criticized traditional traction. Traction fails in many cases because it causes muscular stretch receptors to fire, which then cause para-spinal muscles to contract. This muscular response actually causes an increase in intradiscal pressure. On the other hand, genuine decompression is achieved by gradual and calculated increases of distraction forces to spinal structures, utilizing various degrees of distraction forces.

A highly specialized computer must modulate the application of distraction forces in order to achieve the ideal effect. The system uses applies a gentle, curved angle pull which yields far greater treatment results that a less comfortable, sharp angle pull. Distraction must be offset by cycles of partial relaxation.

The system continuously monitors spinal resistance and adjusts distraction forces accordingly. A specific lumbar segment can be targeted for treatment by changing the angle of distraction. This patented technique of decompression may prevent muscle spasm and
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