

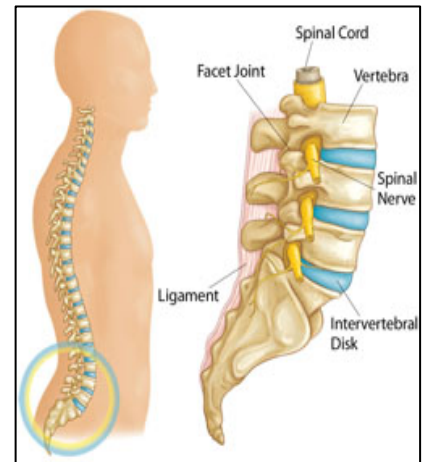


DEGENERATIVE DISC DISEASE



What is a degenerative disc disease (DDD)?

Degenerative disc disease is a condition caused by the breakdown of the intervertebral discs, which act to cushion the bones of your spine. As individuals get older, the spine begins to show signs of wear and tear as the discs dry out and shrink. These age-related changes can lead to smaller disc space, disc herniation, growth of additional bone, or spinal stenosis. All of these changes can put pressure on your spinal cord and nerves and may cause back pain.



Where does it occur?

DDD occurs in the disc itself, which is between two vertebrae. It also leads to smaller spaces for the nerves and spinal cord to move through.

What are possible signs and symptoms?

Signs and symptoms of DDD vary from person to person and they depend on where in the spine and to what extent the degeneration has occurred. Signs and symptoms

- Pain in low back and possible into the legs
- Numbness or tingling into the legs
- Sitting, bending, and twisting cause more pain
- Laying down reduces pain
- More movement is better than sitting or standing

How does physical therapy help?

- Strengthening and stretching - Extension-based
- Stabilization techniques
- Lumbar traction and distraction
- Manual therapy – mobilization, massage, stretching
- Safe and proper transfers and walking techniques
- Posture, ergonomics, and body mechanics
- Modalities – electrical stimulation, ultrasound, cold laser

