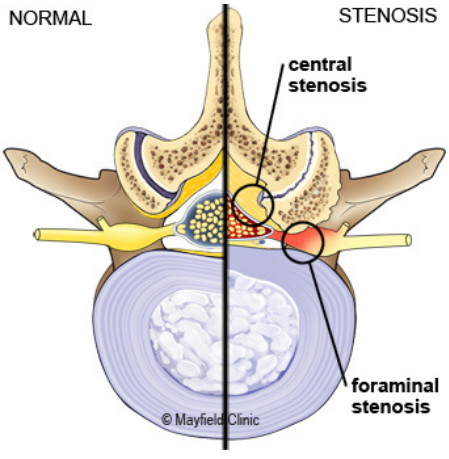
PREMIER NEURO SPINE INSTITUTE
INNOVATIVE BRAIN AND SPINE CARE

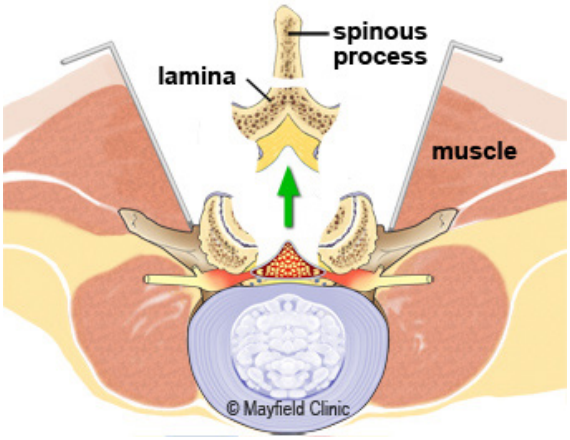
CERVICAL POSTERIOR FORAMINOTOMY

CANDIDATES FOR A CERVICAL POSTERIOR FORAMINOTOMY

Spinal stenosis is a blockage that narrows the spinal column and may block an intervertebral foramen, causing compression on the spinal nerves and resulting in back pain. Spinal stenosis can be caused by degenerative arthritis of the spine, degeneration or herniation of the intervertebral discs, enlargement of ligaments, Spondylolisthesis, cysts or tumors, skeletal disease or congenital issues. These conditions may also result in bone spurs or bulging, which leads to compression within the spinal column and causes pain to the immediate area, radiating tingling and weakness of the limbs.



A Cervical Posterior Foraminotomy may be recommended to treat these issues following non-invasive treatments without sufficient success. If physical therapy, medications and injections have not substantially and sustainably treated the pain, the next step is often a Cervical Posterior Foraminotomy procedure. In a Cervical Posterior Foraminotomy specifically, the damaged disc is typically located to the side near the foramen and can be accessed more readily from an incision at the back of the neck.



WHAT IS A CERVICAL POSTERIOR FORAMINOTOMY?

A Cervical Posterior Foraminotomy is a minimally invasive procedure to alleviate pain and muscle weakness caused by a compressed nerve. The surgeon accesses the nerve root through a small incision in the neck and cuts away the bone to expose the root. If compression is caused by the disc, it is removed to relieve pressure.

The goal of the procedure is to open the tunnels in the vertebrae where the nerves exit off of the main spinal cord. This technique is used to decompress a painful nerve. A small incision is made beside the spine in the location the patient is experiencing pain, next to the affected vertebra.

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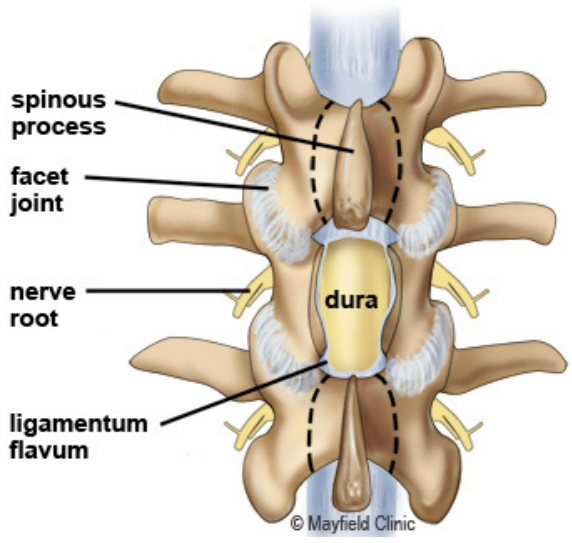
Using x-rays and a special microscope to guide each movement, minimally invasive tools are used to push the back muscles covering the area to the side to expose the blocked intervertebral foramen. Blockages such as bone spurs and disc fragments are removed to widen the intervertebral foramen and provide space for the nerves.

The tools are then removed, the muscles are put back into place and the incision is closed.



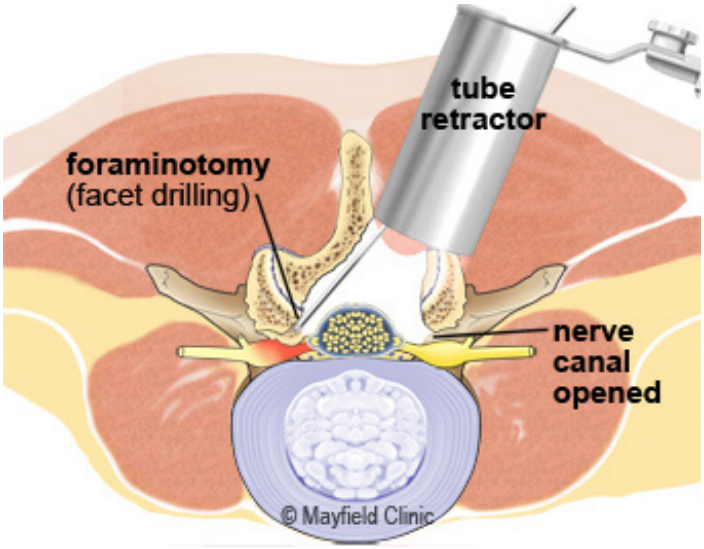
RESULTS OF A CERVICAL POSTERIOR FORAMINOTOMY PROCEDURE

Within the following hours, the patient should be able to sit up in bed. He or she may be experiencing pain from the surgical procedure, which can be treated with pain medications. Eating may return to normal.

The affected area should be handled with care following the procedure. Certain movements may need to be avoided while the patient heals. He or she should be able to return home the same day of the procedure and will need to continue caring for the wound.

In the weeks following the surgery, light movements may be possible and physical therapy may be recommended. After a few months, activity should return to normal and the patient should be experiencing some relief from his or her symptoms.

The results of the procedure will vary from patient to patient, but most people report improvements in their symptoms including a decrease in pain. Specifically, patients typically experience relief of pain radiating in the arms and legs.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF A CERVICAL POSTERIOR FORAMINOTOMY?

As with any surgical procedure, risks are always present. The risks of a Cervical Posterior Foraminotomy procedure include infection, blood loss, nerve or spinal cord damage, stroke and complications from the anesthesia. These risks may be amplified by age, location of the affected area along the patient's spine and any other medical conditions that may be present.

There is also a risk that the Cervical Posterior Foraminotomy procedure may not be effective and the patient may need additional surgery down the road.

PRE AND POST-PROCEDURE INSTRUCTIONS

Pre-Procedure:

1. You will need to complete a medical clearance and/or lab work prior to surgery. Specific instructions will be given to you by our scheduling coordinator. You should get your lab work done PRIOR to your medical clearance appointment so your PCP can review the results during the appointment.

2. You must discontinue the following medication seven (7) days prior to surgery: Aspirin, Aspirin related products, NSAIDS such as Advil, Ibuprofen, Aleve, Feldane, Nuprin, Motrin, Celebrex, Darvon, Ecotrin, Endodan, Excedrin, Florinal, Norgesic, Orphengesic, Percodan, Pravigard, and Soma. These medications may be resumed as soon as possible when deemed safe by your surgeon.

3. YOU MUST discontinue ALL blood thinners such as: Plavix (Clopidogrel), Coumadin (Warfarin), Eliquis, Pradaxa, Brillinta, Fish Oil, Aggrenox, Vitamin K, Vitamin E, Vitamin B6 7 day prior to surgery. These medications may be resumed as soon as possible when deemed safe by your surgeon.

4. FOR WOMEN ONLY: Hold Estrogens (Cenestin, Estratest, Estropipate, Menest, Ortho-Est, Premarin, Premphase, Prempro etc.) on the day of surgery and resume when instructed by your physician.

5. Hold ALL herbal supplements including garlic, ginseng, and St. John's Wart 7 days before surgery.

6. Please discontinue any and all diet pills two (2) weeks prior to your surgical procedure.

7. DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT THE DAY BEFORE YOUR SURGERY, AND NOTHING ON THE MORNING OF YOUR SURGERY, UNLESS OTHERWISE ADVISED BY YOUR PHYSICIAN. You may take essential medications, such as blood pressure medications with JUST a sip of water.

8. Please arrive at the surgery center about 1-2 hours prior to your anticipated start time. Typically, the surgery center will provide you with instructions on when to arrive and specific directions (1-2 days beforehand) on when to get there and what to bring. However, it is VERY important that you bring your most recent imaging with you (CT scan/MRI disk).

9. We highly encourage bringing a friend or a family member to the surgery center with you, so that we can explain the post-operative rules and instructions.

10. After your procedure, you will recover in the PACU where nursing staff will provide you with post-operative care and inform you of how the procedure went.

11. If you are prescribed opiate pain medication by another physician (such as pain management physician), MAKE SURE you see them prior to surgery so you are covered for post-surgical pain. Pharmacies will not fill prescriptions from another provider. If you do not take opiates at home, we will prescribe you with a 7-day course to cover your post operative pain.

12. After surgery, you will most likely require physical therapy. This has been proven to lead to optimal outcomes. If you have a preference of a physical therapist, please let your provider know prior to or during your post-operative appointment.

Post Procedure:

1. Refrain from strenuous activities and follow post-operative instructions.

2. Pain can increase in your treatment areas 2-5 days after your procedure. It may take up to 14 days for symptoms to improve. Symptoms may fluctuate during the healing process, which occurs over 4-8 weeks. You likely will not feel fully back to "normal" for about 3 months.

3. You may have some difficulty swallowing and a sore throat for several days after your procedure. This is very common and will typically go away on its own. If it does not go away or you have difficulty with breathing please, call the number provided below.

4. You should apply ice around places of discomfort for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. Please place a barrier between your skin and the ice. Heat is okay to apply to your back or neck muscles, just not over the incision site.

5. You may experience a low-grade fever after treatment. Call if your temperature is above 100.4.

6. No anti-inflammatory medication (Celebrex, Advil, Mobic, Motrin, Aleve) should be used for 10 days after surgery.

7. Light exercise or physical therapy is okay to start 2 weeks after treatment.

8. Pain medication prescriptions may say to take 2 tablets every 6 hours. If your instructions say this, JUST TAKE ONE tablet every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. WE DO NOT REFILL NARCOTIC PAIN MEDICATIONS AFTER SURGERY. If you continue to have pain, you will need to see a pain management doctor for narcotics.

9. If you were prescribed a brace, you must wear it when out of bed. If you are sleeping, sitting down, relaxing or eating, you may remove your brace. You will be in your brace between 4-6 weeks, depending on the type of surgery you had. If you had a cervical disc arthroplasty "replacement," you will only require a soft collar for two weeks.

10. Do not drive until you can stomp your feet on the ground and do not feel pain.

11. Wound care: You will have stitches buried underneath your skin. They will dissolve on their own. On top of the wound, you will have skin glue and steri strips (which look like little pieces of white tape). PLEASE INFORM PROVIDER PRIOR IF YOU HAVE ANY ALLERGIES TO SKIN GLUE OR ADHESIVE PRODUCTS. Do NOT remove or peel off steri-strips, these will fall off on their own. On top of the steri-strips, you will have gauze and tape. The gauze and tape is what you will be able to remove in 3 days. Do not wet the dressing at all in those 3 days. On day 3, you may remove the top layer of your dressing in the morning and shower as you normally would. DO NOT SUBMERGE wound in water for 3 weeks (bath tub, jacuzzi, beach, etc.).

12. Besides narcotic medication for pain, you may use Tylenol (acetaminophen) to optimize pain control. You may take up to 3,000 mg per day, unless contraindicated due to allergy or liver issues. Make note that some narcotics are mixed with Tylenol, (for example, Percocet has 325 mg of Tylenol per pill) so dose accordingly.

13. You may walk as long as you are stable. We do want you out of bed as much as possible unless otherwise instructed. NO BENDING, TWISTING, OR LIFTING OVER 10 LBS FOR 4 WEEKS.

14. You will need to follow up in the clinic for a post-operative

evaluation in 4 weeks. Depending on your procedure, you may be required to have an X-ray done prior to the appointment. PLEASE BRING THE CD OF YOUR IMAGES. Your X-ray script will be given to you the day of your surgery. If you do not receive it or lose it, please call for a new script.

15. You may have a drain after surgery. Do not be alarmed. The reason we place these drains is because you may have been a little "oozy" after the procedure. We place them so the extra blood and fluid can drain out of your wound easily. They are typically removed the next day by your home healthcare nurse. If you do not have home healthcare set up, call the office for an appointment to remove the drain. For questions regarding surgical scheduling, please call Chris (Scheduling Coordinator) at 727-605-1770 (EXT 1003). For any post-operative questions or concerns, please call our office at 727-605-1770. Please note that you may be sent to voicemail. We will return your call as soon as possible. If it is an emergency, please call 911. If you are calling after hours, please leave a voicemail in the general inbox and it will be forwarded to the medical team.

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