

Kyphoplasty

Will My Spine be Normal After Kyphoplasty Surgery?

No. Even if you have considerable pain relief, the spine is never completely normal after a kyphoplasty. The conditions that led to your compression fracture (osteoporosis) or a fall could affect this vertebra or others and require additional intervention.

How Long is the Hospital Stay?

Many patients leave the hospital the day of the procedure, though some may go home the next day. Patients can return to their normal activities within a day or two with few, if any, restrictions.



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What if I Have Other Questions?

Just give us a call. We'll be happy to answer any questions you may have. And be sure to ask us about our upcoming seminars on back and neck pain – we'd love to see you!



901 East 18th Street • Tifton, Georgia
229-353-BONE (2663) or 888-807-0101
www.TRMCortho.com

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What is a Kyphoplasty?

Kyphoplasty is a minimally invasive surgical procedure for people suffering with compression fractures of the spine. The procedure involves the insertion of a balloon into the collapsed vertebra followed by injection of a special material. The material hardens and stabilizes the vertebra, preventing further movement, and may reduce the pain caused by bone rubbing against bone. Patients can resume their activities almost immediately. Previously, the only treatment available to most people with this problem was weeks of bed rest and pain medications.

Why Would Someone Need a Kyphoplasty?

As mentioned, the most common reason for kyphoplasty is to stabilize a compression fracture of one or more vertebrae. Compression fractures can occur from an accident or trauma, but the underlying cause is likely to be osteoporosis. The National Osteoporosis Foundation estimates that ten million Americans have osteoporosis, and the disease causes 700,000 vertebral fractures annually. The majority of

these fractures occur in women. Younger people can also suffer these fractures as the result of weakened bones from the long-term use of steroids used to treat diseases such as asthma, lupus, and rheumatoid arthritis. Sometimes the bone becomes so weak and brittle that a fracture may occur by simply coughing or rolling out of bed. Regardless of the cause, a compression fracture of the spine may result in greatly limited activity, severe pain, and a tremendous reduction in the quality of life.

What Happens During a Kyphoplasty Procedure?

Through small incisions and using special x-rays, the doctor inserts a narrow tube into the damaged vertebra. Through this tube, a balloon is inserted into the center of the vertebral body. The balloon is then inflated, pushing the bone back towards its original height and shape. The balloon is then removed and the special material is injected into the remaining cavity.

Once it hardens, it should stabilize the fractured vertebra near its normal height. Restoring the height of the vertebra is more successful if kyphoplasty is performed within six to eight weeks after the fracture. Kyphoplasty can be performed with local anesthetic or under general anesthesia and generally takes 30-60 minutes for each fracture treated.

What are the Risks?

While uncommon, complications can occur during and after surgery. Complications that may occur with kyphoplasty include infection, nerve or spinal cord damage, post-operative pneumonia, further fracture of the site and possible worsening of existing medical conditions. General medical issues such as heart or lung issues can be exacerbated by surgery. Therefore, in some cases, an extensive evaluation prior to surgery will be performed to help avoid these complications.

