



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

Discography

Discography is the injection of radiographic dye into the intervertebral disc. Along with the injection X-ray pictures used to find out the condition of the disc. Discography is used to determine which disc is painful.

When is discography used?

Discography is used when other diagnostic tests have not located the disc that is causing low back pain. It is also used to find out if another disc has bulged if you have recurrent back pain after having surgery. And discography is used as a preliminary test to spinal fusion.

What happens during discography

You will be asked to lie face down on the X-ray table. A mild sedative may be given. A local anesthesia is given to numb the area around the disc. Using x-ray guidance a long needle is inserted. Once the tip of the needle is confirmed to be in the disc contrast dye will be injected. A series of X-ray pictures will be taken. You will be asked to let the doctor know if this causes your usual pain.

Can there be any complications?

- Inflammation of the disc 2-3% (called discitis)
- Complications that rarely occur are:
 - Headache
 - Bleeding
 - Subdural or epidural abscess
 - Meningitis