



Press Release

INDIANAPOLIS - A LEADER IN SPINE SURGERY AND TREATMENT

Physicians with Indiana Spine Group develop and test the latest in medical technology

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (January 27, 2004) - Indianapolis is known for many things - the Crossroads of America, the greatest spectacle in racing - the Indianapolis 500. It is also the home of many of the latest developments and advances in spine surgery.

Physicians with Indiana Spine Group are pioneers in their quest for providing the latest technology for treating patients with spinal disorders and abnormalities. Located in Indianapolis, Indiana Spine Group physicians are participating in clinical trials that are leading the way in the development of new spine surgery techniques and treatments. Not only are they involved in the research of the newest technologies; they are also integral to the development of some of these devices and technologies. Rick Sasso, M.D. states, "The goal of our research and development is to treat patients in the most effective manner that will maintain their spinal mobility while eliminating patients' pain." "For surgery patients, this means developing new surgical techniques and devices resulting in minimally invasive spine surgery," Dr Sasso adds.

A few research studies and developments that Indiana Spine Group (ISG) has been involved with include:

Cervical Disc Implant - Surgeons with ISG performed the first cervical disc implant in North America in May 2002. A cervical disc implant is used to treat herniated discs in lieu of traditional fusion surgery. (Clinical trial, randomized study, status ongoing)

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Lumbar Disc Implant - Surgeons with ISG placed the first FlexiCore lumbar disc in the world. The new device provides patients suffering from degenerative disc disease with a superior option to traditional fusion surgery. (Clinical trial, randomized study, status ongoing)

Percutaneous Reference Frame (PRF) - This relatively new device, developed by Dr. Sasso, provides spine surgeons the ability to perform minimally invasive spine surgery by allowing real-time imaging via an infrared camera and the PRF to show positioning of instrumentation; i.e. global positioning of surgical instruments. (Currently in use and is now used with an intra-operative CT-scan that provides 3-D images)

Electrothermal Disc Decompression (EDD) and Intradiscal Electrothermal Therapy (IDET) Studies - Research study that is evaluating the effectiveness of two relatively new procedures, EDD and IDET, to treat lower back pain and sciatica. These treatments utilize a heat coil that is inserted via a catheter into the disc of the spine. (Randomized blind study, status ongoing)

Those that suffer from chronic back and neck pain in Indiana have benefited greatly by having the Indiana Spine Group conveniently located. After a waterskiing injury when he was 17, Mike Rudicle, now in his early 40s, was suffering from chronic back pain severely limiting his activity; i.e. golf and waterskiing. Mike knew he would need surgery sometime soon but he did not want a traditional cervical disc fusion that would limit his mobility. While doing research on the Internet, he found a clinical trial being conducted on cervical disc implants in Europe and thought this would be his only option. A worldwide traveler for his job, Rudicle preferred surgery in Europe to traditional fusion surgery. After more research, Mike learned that a clinical trial site was also in North America. "I was surprised and glad to learn that the study was also being conducted in my backyard by physicians with Indiana Spine Group," states Mike Rudicle. After being accepted into the trial, Rudicle had a

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cervical disc implant performed by Rick Sasso, M.D. in November 2002. He is now pain free and once again enjoying golfing and waterskiing.

The Indiana Spine Group provides a center of excellence for comprehensive spine treatment, including orthopaedic spine surgery, neurosurgical spine surgery and non-operative spine treatments. The practice is a major referral and research center for comprehensive spine surgery and non-operative spine treatments. Physicians with Indiana Spine Group include; Rick Sasso, M.D.; Kenneth Renkens, M.D.; Kevin Macadaeg, M.D.; Dan Nordmann, M.D.; Thomas Puschak, M.D.; and Thomas Reilly, M.D..

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