

## OS15lite Lumbar Microdiscectomy

Expires end of December 2019

A more detailed version of this procedure specific information sheet is available. Please ask your health practitioner at Joondalup Health Campus for a copy.

**Write questions or notes here:**

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This document will give you information about a lumbar microdiscectomy. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

### What is a slipped disc?

A slipped disc is where the spongy centre of a disc bulges out and puts pressure on a nerve where it leaves your spine (see figure 1). This is called a slipped disc and it can cause severe pain, as well as weakness and numbness.

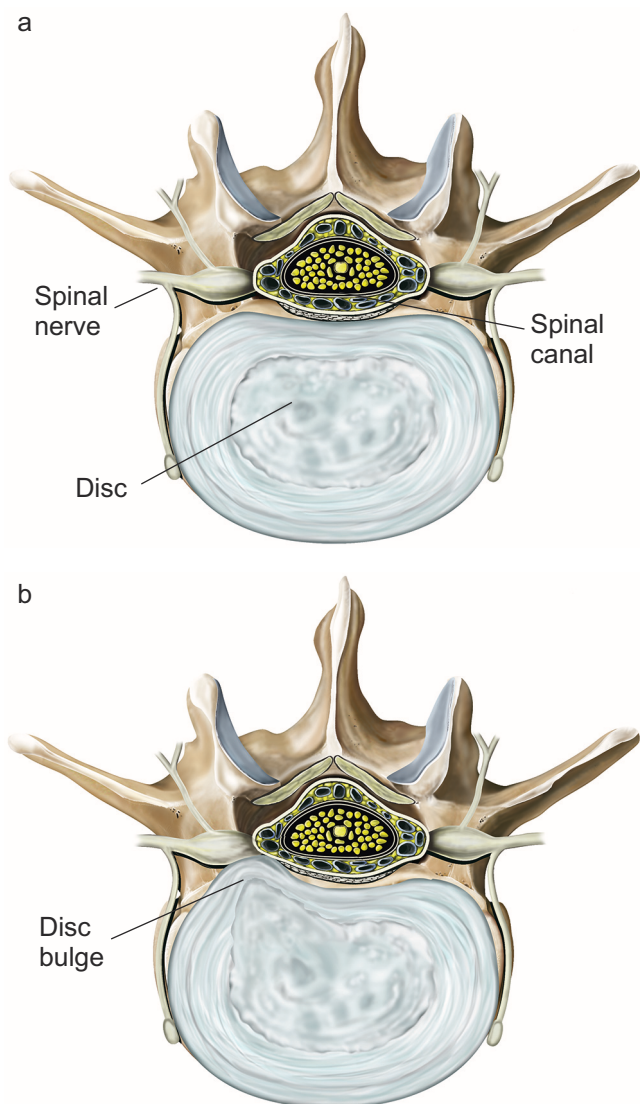


Figure 1

a A normal spinal canal and disc

b A disc bulge pressing on a spinal nerve

### What are the benefits of surgery?

The aim is to relieve the pressure on the nerve so it can recover. Your symptoms should improve and this should help you to get back to your normal activities.

### Are there any alternatives to lumbar microdiscectomy?

For many people, symptoms get better without surgery.

If you have a lot of pain, you can also have a steroid injection.

### What does the operation involve?

Various anaesthetic techniques are possible. The operation usually takes 45 minutes to an hour.

Your surgeon will make a cut on the centre of your back. They will use an operating microscope to remove the disk.

### What complications can happen?

#### 1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Unsightly scarring
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Blood clots
- Difficulty passing urine
- Chest infection
- Heart attack or stroke

#### 2 Specific complications

- Worse pain or numbness down your leg
- Numbness between your legs, loss of normal bowel and bladder control and, for men, problems having an erection
- Neuropathic pain
- Tear of the thin membrane that covers the nerves in your spine

### How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day or the day after.

Do not lift anything heavy or twist your body.

Make sure you keep a good posture when sitting and walking.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.


9 in 10 people make a good recovery from surgery and are able to return to normal activities.

### Summary

A slipped disc is where the spongy centre of a disc bulges out and puts pressure on a nerve where it leaves your spine. The aim is to relieve the pressure on the nerve so it can recover.

## Acknowledgements

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