

Lumbar Surgery Decision Aid: Dr. Katsuura's Guide for a Big Decision

Symptoms which may prompt you to consider lumbar surgery:



Low back pain



Sciatica/ leg pain



Leg Numbness/ tingling

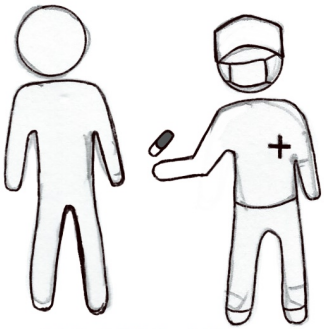


Leg weakness

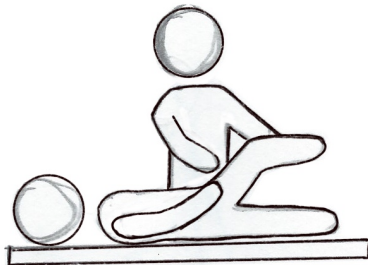


Inability to walk long distances

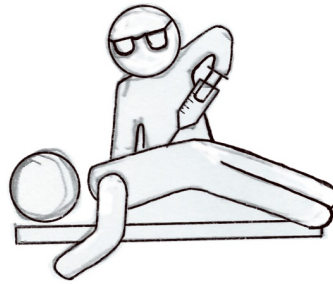
Treatments to consider before surgery: May try these individually or in combination



NSAIDS/ Pain medications



Physical therapy

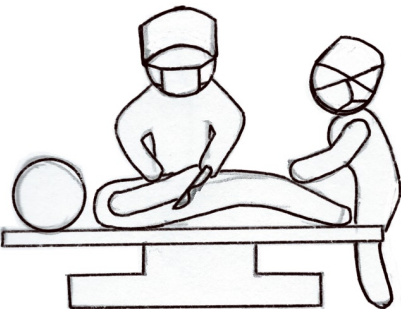


Injections



Sometimes you just get better with time

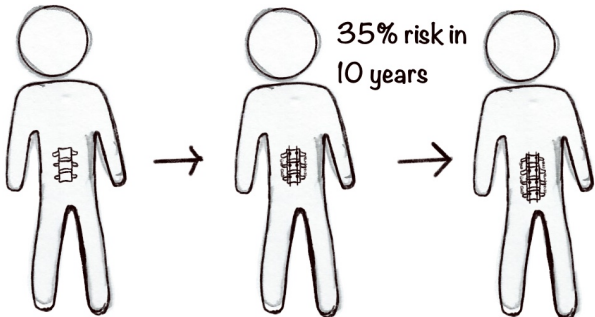
Things to consider about surgery: Sometimes surgery speeds recovery but know this:



Surgery has risks: for example scarring around nerves, infection (may require another surgery for washout), medical complications (like having a heart attack), nerve damage resulting in new weakness, pain or numbness.

There is a chance surgery won't take away your symptoms. Some symptoms may improve while others may not (numbness/weakness). Even if you get better, you may have other issues in the future.

In some cases, you can typically decide to have surgery at a later date with no ill effects.



Decompressions may need to be **revised to fusions** in the future

Fusions may need to be **extended or revised in the future**



There are post-op restrictions: no bending, lifting or twisting.

