

# Lumbar disc herniation surgery is effective for octogenarians

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(HealthDay)—For octogenarian patients with lumbar disc herniation, unilateral laminectomy and discectomy seems safe and effective, according to a study published in the April issue of the *Journal of Spinal Disorders and Techniques*.

Hai Nie, M.D., from the Affiliated Hospital of Chengdu University, Sichuan, China, and colleagues examined the efficacy and safety of lumbar disc herniation surgery for octogenarian patients. Participants included 64 patients (mean age, 83.7 years) who underwent unilateral laminectomy and discectomy. Outcomes were compared with a control group of 628 patients, aged 40 to 60 years (mean age, 49.8 years).

The researchers found that the length of hospital stay was significantly different for the very elderly and middle-aged patients. Operative time, intraoperative estimated blood loss, and complication rate were not significantly different between the groups. There were no significant differences for very old and middle-aged patients with respect to preoperative, postoperative, and final follow-up visual analog scale (VAS) or [Oswestry Disability Index](#) (ODI) scores. After surgery and at final follow-up, the VAS and ODI scores were significantly improved compared with before surgery. The majority (89.1 percent) of octogenarian patients expressed satisfaction with outcome.

"Conventional laminectomy, discectomy, and/or [spinal fusion surgery](#) in patients above 80 years is a feasible, safe, and effective treatment without significant morbidity, compared with middle-aged patients," the authors write. "There was long-lasting improvement and high [patient satisfaction](#) after lumbar discectomy in the majority of the very elderly patients."

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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