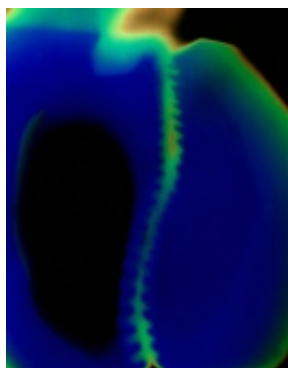


# Earlier surgery tied to greater benefit in cervical radiculopathy

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(HealthDay)—For patients with painful degenerative disc disease and radiculopathy, undergoing anterior cervical discectomy and fusion (ACDF) surgery within six months of becoming symptomatic is associated with a greater reduction in arm pain scores, according to a study published in the March 1 issue of *The Spine Journal*.

Sigita Burneikiene, M.D., from Boulder Neurosurgical Associates in Colorado, and colleagues examined whether duration of symptoms (DOS) had an effect on clinical outcomes in 58 patients undergoing one- or two-level ACDF surgeries for cervical degenerative radiculopathy. Patients were followed for a mean of 37.2 months. Clinical outcome analysis was compared for patients who had [surgery](#) within six months (29 patients) versus more than six months (29 patients) after becoming symptomatic.

The researchers found that patients who had surgery within six months reported significantly greater reduction in arm pain scores than those who waited more than six months ( $P = 0.04$ ), after controlling for preoperative scores. There were no significant between-group differences seen in scores for postoperative neck pain visual analog scale, neck disability index, or Short-Form 36

physical component summary and mental component summary.

"Neck and upper extremity pain can be successfully treated conservatively," the authors write. "In those cases, when surgical intervention is pursued, [patients](#) with shorter DOS have better improvement in radiculopathy symptoms that is statistically significant."

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the medical device industry.

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