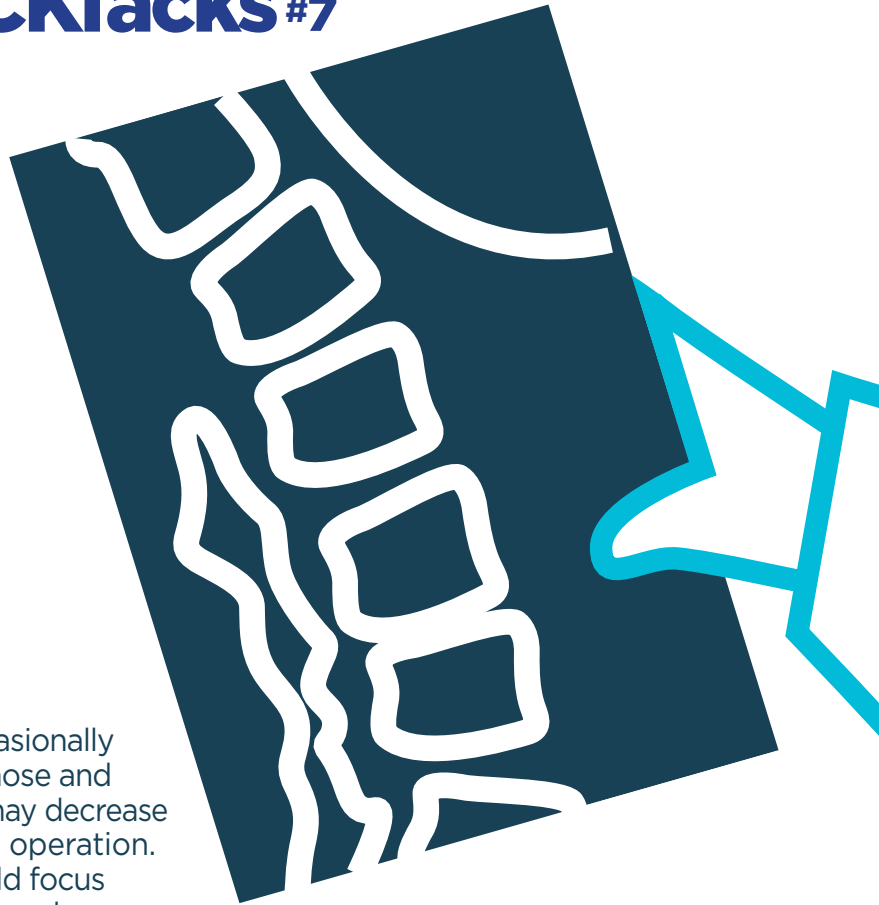


Do I need a surgical referral?

Most back pain patients who are referred to a surgeon don't need surgery, but here are some general recommendations.

Back and neck pain is a complex issue that occasionally requires a team of health professionals to diagnose and manage. Being referred to a surgeon too soon may decrease the quality of care or result in an unnecessary operation. In most cases of back and neck pain, care should focus on physical treatments, occasionally with emotional or behavioral support, to create the best long-term result.



“RED FLAG” SYMPTOMS THAT REQUIRE SURGICAL REFERRAL:

- Inability to go to the bathroom
- Can't control urination
- Groin area numbness
- Severe muscle weakness in the legs

WHAT MIGHT A SURGICAL SPECIALIST RECOMMEND?

A surgical specialist may suggest further physical treatment, physical therapy, massage therapy, acupuncture or prescribe injections. But in situations where issues are not improving with physical care, surgery can help correct an anatomical condition. For example, low back surgery can help correct a spinal instability or nerve pinching that isn't improving after non-surgical care. Whenever possible, most specialists will only turn to surgery when all other avenues have been pursued.

BE SURE TO CONSIDER ALL OPTIONS BEFORE SURGERY. Surgery should always be a last resort, especially if fusion is suggested.

- Always consider getting a second opinion.
- Spine surgeons may hold different opinions about when to operate and what surgery to perform.

Questions? Text: #IQuestion or call 1.800.531.098