

KYPHOPLASTY

for Back Pain &
Osteoporosis

KYPHOPLASTY

is used to relieve pain associated with compression fractures of the spine, often related to osteoporosis. This information has been provided by your provider so you can better understand this procedure. Your provider will make the best recommendation for your specific needs.

This pamphlet is for general education only. Specific questions or concerns should always be directed to your provider. Your provider can explain possible risks or side effects.

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KYPHOPLASTY

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What is kyphoplasty?

Kyphoplasty is a minimally invasive procedure to correct compression fractures in the back. It is an x-ray guided procedure performed by a board-certified doctor. The doctor uses a combination of vertebroplasty (cement injected into the spine to correct breaks) with a balloon technique. The balloon is about the size of your thumb and “inflates” the fractured vertebrae. This makes room for doctors to reshape the vertebrae before injecting the cement. Surgeons have successfully performed this procedure for the last 20 years.

What causes compression fractures?

Compression fractures are usually the result of osteoporosis. These fractures are common for older populations and are more likely to affect women. Compression fractures can happen from light exertion, even from getting dressed or lifting a bowl of soup.

What should I expect with kyphoplasty?

Before kyphoplasty, you will have a pain assessment, or your doctor may refer you. These fractures do not always show up on x-rays immediately, so you may need more imaging. The entire process will take about 3-4 hours. This includes evaluation, sedation, imaging, procedure and recovery.

The procedure itself is quick—only about 15 minutes. You will be awake but sedated during the procedure and your back will be numbed. During the procedure, two hollow needles are inserted into the spine. Then, doctors use the balloon technique to lift and reshape the vertebrae. Once it’s reshaped, they use bone cement to glue the broken pieces together.

What is recovery like?

After the procedure, there is no extensive recovery period. You will lie on your back for a short period while the cement hardens. After that, you will be monitored about an hour, then can go home. You may experience some soreness for a day or two. You will also be asked not to lift anything heavy or do any strenuous activity for a few days. Like with all procedures, there are some risks. But these are minimal, and most are rare. Possible risks include:

- Bleeding
- Infection
- Embolism of cement [*rare*]
- Neuro injury/paralysis [*very rare*]

Is kyphoplasty right for you?

Kyphoplasty may not be right for everyone. If you are young, this procedure is likely not for you. Most patients are 75-95 years old. Likewise, this does not work for all types of fractures. Kyphoplasty is specifically designed for compression fractures.

For those who qualify, it is a life-changing procedure. **Most patients walk out of the office pain free.** It’s best to have kyphoplasty as soon as possible after a fracture. This helps ensure that the doctor is able to reshape the vertebrae, which also helps maintain your posture. Since compression fractures don’t always show up on x-rays, it can be difficult to diagnose. If you have persistent back pain without a cause or experience a sharp pain, see your doctor as soon as possible.

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