

## MEDICAL MONDAYS | News Notes

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PREMIER RADIOLOGY

**TOPIC: Kyphoplasty**

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### What is Kyphoplasty?

Kyphoplasty is used to treat painful compression fractures in the spine. In a compression fracture, all or part of a spine bone collapses. The procedure is also called balloon kyphoplasty.

Your surgeon places adhesive into your broken bones to help stabilize your spine. It's done through a small opening so you'll heal faster. The procedure helps correct the bone deformity and relieves the pain associated with spinal compression fractures.

### Preparing for Surgery

Your doctor will take pictures of your spine with X-rays, MRIs, or CT scans. Let your doctor know if there's a chance you might be pregnant or if you have any allergies. Quit smoking. Tell him what medicines you use. You may have to stop some pain medicines and other drugs that thin the blood. And you can't eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your surgery.

### What Happens During Kyphoplasty Surgery?

This procedure helps correct the bone deformity and relieves the pain associated with spinal compression fractures. During the procedure:

- A tube is inserted through a half inch opening in the back into the damaged vertebrae. X-rays help ensure the accuracy of the procedure.
- A thin catheter tube -- with a balloon at the tip -- is guided into the vertebra.
- The balloon is inflated to create a cavity in which liquid bone adhesive is injected.
- The balloon is then deflated and removed, and bone adhesive is injected into the cavity.
- The adhesive mixture hardens in about 10 minutes.

### What to Expect After Surgery?

It's natural to want to get back to your regular activities as soon as possible after surgery for a spinal compression fracture. Once your procedure is complete, you'll be taken to a recovery room. The medical staff will watch you for an hour or two while the anesthesia wears off. You'll leave the facility the same day, but you won't be able to drive yourself home, so you'll need a ride.

## Once You're Home

You might have some soreness in your back for a day or two at the spot where the surgery was done. Putting an ice pack on the area can bring some relief.

You may also be able to take an over-the-counter pain reliever such as [acetaminophen](#) or [ibuprofen](#). Ask your doctor which is right for you. Or you might need a prescription for a stronger pain medicine.

Often, [back pain](#) will start to ease up 24 to 48 hours after the operation. For some people it may take longer -- up to 3 days -- to feel better. Everyone is different. Talk to your surgeon about what to expect. If you're still hurting after surgery, you can discuss other ways to get relief.

Your doctor will probably encourage you to go back to your normal activities as soon as possible. But you shouldn't do intense [exercise](#) or heavy lifting for a few weeks -- that could reinjure your back.

A physical therapist can show you exercises to help you recover, too. Your doctor might also recommend that you wear a brace to hold your back in place while it heals.

You'll see your doctor again in the weeks following surgery. He'll check to see if you're healing well and ask you if you're still having pain.

### Call your doctor right away if you have:

- Back or rib pain that is really bad or gets worse over time
- Fever
- Numbness, tingling, or [weakness](#)

FOR AN APPOINTMENT with Dr. Wunder:

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