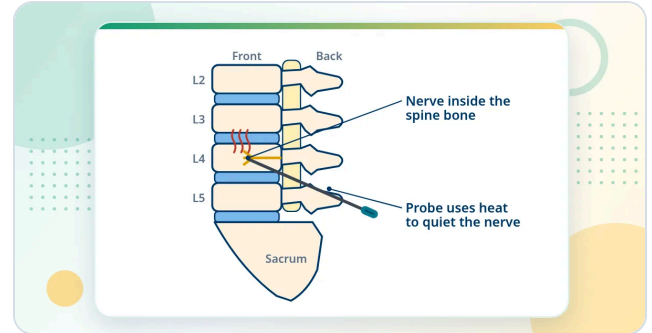


Basivertebral nerve ablation

Some long-lasting low back pain comes from the bones of the spine themselves. This is called vertebrogenic pain. Inside each bone (vertebra) is a small nerve called the basivertebral nerve. When the top and bottom surfaces of the bone, called the end plates, wear down or get damaged, this nerve can send pain signals. Basivertebral nerve ablation is an outpatient procedure that uses gentle heat to stop this nerve from sending those signals. It may help some people who have had low back pain for at least six months that has not improved with other care.

At GSMC: all GSMC providers evaluate patients and help decide which options may fit, at any of our 7 offices. Results vary.



What it is

Basivertebral nerve ablation is done using the Intracept® system. "Ablation" means using heat to turn off a nerve's ability to send pain signals. A thin probe is placed inside the vertebra, near the basivertebral nerve, and radiofrequency energy heats the nerve. No implant is left behind.

Intracept® is a trademark of Boston Scientific.

Who it may help

Basivertebral nerve ablation may help people who have:

- Chronic low back pain for at least six months
- At least six months of conservative care, such as therapy and medicines, without enough relief
- A deep, central low back ache that is often worse with sitting, bending or activity
- An MRI showing Modic type 1 or type 2 changes (signs of end plate damage) at the painful levels, from L3 to S1

Basivertebral nerve ablation is not designed to treat sciatica or leg pain from a pinched nerve.

What to expect

1. **Before:** we review your MRI to look for Modic changes. If your MRI is older, a new one may be needed.
2. **Anesthesia:** the procedure is done as an outpatient, usually with sedation or anesthesia.
3. **Access:** using live X-ray guidance, your physician makes a small opening in the back and guides a thin tool into the vertebra.
4. **Ablation:** a radiofrequency probe is placed near the basivertebral nerve, and gentle heat is applied.
5. **Repeat if needed:** this may be done at more than one level.
6. **Finish:** the tools are removed and small bandages are placed. The procedure usually takes about an hour.
7. **Going home:** most people go home the same day.

Recovery

- Soreness at the treatment site for several days is common.
- Most people return to light activity within a few days.
- Some people notice a change in their back pain within weeks. For others it takes longer, and some people do not improve.
- Your physician may suggest physical therapy to help you build strength and activity.

Is it right for me?

May be a good fit: adults with long-lasting central low back pain whose MRI shows Modic type 1 or 2 changes at L3 to S1, and who have not improved enough with at least six months of conservative care.

May not be a good fit: people whose main pain is in the leg (such as sciatica), people with an active infection, a tumor or recent fracture in the spine, severe osteoporosis, pregnancy, or certain implanted devices. Pain from other sources, such as the facet joints or SI joint, may need a different treatment.

Risks

Risks include soreness at the site, bleeding, infection and a short-term increase in pain. Nerve injury is rare. Pain may not improve. Sedation or anesthesia also carries risks. We will review your specific risks with you.

Questions people ask

What is vertebrogenic pain? It is low back pain that comes from damage to the end plates of the vertebrae, the top and bottom surfaces of the bones in your spine.

What are Modic changes? Modic changes are patterns seen on an MRI that suggest end plate

damage. Type 1 and type 2 changes are the ones linked to vertebrogenic pain.

Do I need a new MRI? Possibly. Your physician will review your MRI for Modic changes. An updated MRI may be needed if yours is older.

How is basivertebral nerve ablation different from radiofrequency ablation of the facets? Basivertebral nerve ablation treats the basivertebral nerve inside the vertebra. Facet radiofrequency ablation treats small nerves to the facet joints at the back of the spine.

Insurance and cost

GSMC participates with all Aetna plans, including Aetna HMO, and many other plans. Coverage depends on your plan and may need prior authorization. Our team checks your benefits before treatment.

When to call us: fever or chills; redness, swelling or drainage where a needle or device was placed; new or worse pain, numbness or weakness. **Call 911** for chest pain, trouble breathing, or sudden loss of bladder or bowel control.

Call 732-202-3000

One number for all 7 GSMC offices:

Toms River · 1314 Hooper Ave, 1st Floor

Brick · 1608 NJ-88, Suite 102

Whiting · 1100 NJ-70, Entrance B

Barneget · 249 S Main St, Suite 5

Manahawkin · 1109 Beacon Ave

Freehold · 322 Professional View Dr, 300 Bldg, 2nd Fl

West Long Branch · 100 NJ-36, Suite 1K

gsmedicalcenter.org/treatments/basivertebral-nerve-ablation/



General information, not medical advice. Individual results vary, and no outcome can be promised. Illustration is simplified and not to scale. Brand names belong to their owners; GSMC is not affiliated with any manufacturer.