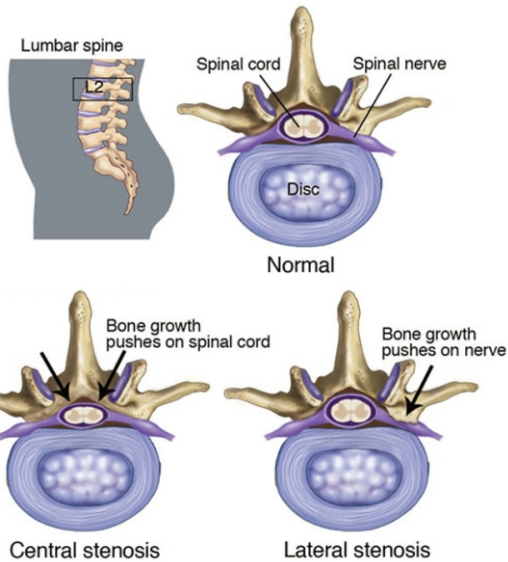


## See How Pearson Physical Therapy Can Save You Over \$22,000!



When it comes to treating lumbar spinal stenosis in the lower back area, physical therapy can be as effective as surgery, a University of Pittsburgh study has found. And it is the best option to try first. Pearson Physical Therapy has a wide variety of exercises including the Postural Restoration Program along with electrical stimulation and heat or ice therapy. The University of Pittsburgh study, published online in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* found nearly equal success between physical therapy and decompression surgery for lumbar spinal stenosis, a degenerative condition that commonly occurs as people age.

Narrowing of the spinal canal in the lumbar region from age, arthritis or many other factors can compress the spinal cord or nerve roots exiting the spine to form large nerves. Resulting compression of these nerves can cause pain, numbness and weakness in the lower back, buttocks, thighs and legs. Decompression surgery is now the fastest-growing intervention in the older population.

Although proportion of successes were similar between those who had surgery versus physical therapy, there also were similar proportions of patients (in each group) who did not achieve a meaningful level of improvement, the report said.

The first thing people should strongly consider is exhausting all non-surgical options. Surgery should be the last resort! Physical therapy is one option, and based on the study, it's a good option, and people should consent to that before surgery.

Of the 169 participants, 87 were randomly assigned to have surgery and 82 to have physical therapy. In the first group, 74 patients underwent surgery, with 45 showing success after two years (a 61 percent success rate). Another 44 patients were assigned to receive physical therapy, but opted instead to have surgery, with 24 having success (or 55 percent) of the other 29 patients who completed physical therapy, 15 had long-term relief (53 percent). There were no gender differences, the report said.

A reason some quit therapy in favor of surgery were the health insurance copays, which ranged from \$20-\$50 for each therapy session. Insurance tended to cover all costs of surgery, including copays.

But the total cost of 12 visits of physical therapy was \$1440, including almost \$300 in out-of-pocket expenses and copays. The cost of decompression surgery is \$24,000. More people likely would opt for more cost-effective therapy if Medicare and other health insurance companies eliminated copays. We need to remove barriers to more cost-effective and non-surgical solutions.

### Steve's Story

Steve is a 39 year old male with a 12 month history of central low back and left leg pain symptoms following two routine incidents, playing with his children and attempting to lift his 70 pound dog. He initially had sharp pain down the back of his left thigh with central low back pain at a near constant intensity. He had tried several treatments without any benefit, including pain medication, steroid injections, chiropractic, massage & a back brace. His functional limitations included the inability to stand, walk, twist, bend forward, get out of his car, or play with his children without increased back pain and exacerbated leg symptoms.

After the six weeks of physical therapy the patient reported a significant decrease in his low back and leg pain symptoms and a dramatic improvement in his ability to function. His functional improvements included a return to normal standing, walking, bending, sleeping and playing with his children without any pain or problem.

Pearson Physical Therapy is able to incorporate the Postural Restoration Institute exercises (PRI) because of special training that Becky, Andrew & Lianne participated in. These exercises are unlike any other exercises you may have done. Our goal is to restore your functional performance and maximize positive long term outcomes. We use specific one on one treatment sessions, along with biomechanical assessment and postural correction to help restore function to the whole body, not just the site of pain.

Call us at Pearson Physical Therapy to see what we can do for you & your back!

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### Single Knee To Chest Exercise

Lying on your back pull your knee up to your chest. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat this exercise 3 times on each leg. The single knee-to-chest exercise is an easy way to stretch your lower back, hamstrings and glutes. Stretching can help you become more flexible and increase the range of motion in your joints. You can use this exercise to ease any muscle tension or pain in these muscle groups, or perform it near the end of your pre-workout warmup or after your workout.

# Patient Appreciation Day

## June 23

8 am - 5 pm

*The treatment you need, the care you deserve.*

**Pearson**  
PHYSICAL THERAPY