



MEDIA RELEASE

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LOCAL SURGEONS PERFORM AREA'S FIRST CERVICAL ARTIFICIAL DISC IMPLANT AT NORTHSIDE MEDICAL CENTER

YOUNGSTOWN, OH (January 25, 2008) - Orthopedic surgeons Paul J. Pagano, M.D. and Douglas Musser, D.O., performed Mahoning Valley's first cervical artificial disc implant on a 39-year-old Canfield resident at Northside Medical Center on Thursday morning January 24. Unlike traditional fusion surgery, the new surgical technique allows patients with cervical disc disorders to maintain motion in their neck following surgery.

This same team of surgeons performed the first lumbar disc replacement in the area at Northside Medical Center in February 2005.

The implant, the PRESTIGE Cervical Disc, is the first artificial disc for the spine approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The artificial disc, which replaces a damaged intervertebral cervical disk, is designed to mimic the disc's normal function and movement, such as bending, flexing and rotating.

"Patients who want to maintain motion in their necks now have a new option," said Dr. Pagano who specializes in spine surgery. "The disc may revolutionize treatment options for surgical patients who normally would have only the option of a motion-restricting process of spinal fusion."

Degenerative disc disease occurs when the intervertebral discs that cushion the vertebrae, or bones of the spine, become compressed, herniated, worn or damaged. Pressure on the nerves and/or spinal cord from disc material causes symptoms of pain, numbness, weakness, muscle spasms and loss of coordination.

Spine surgery is generally recommended when non-surgical treatment to relieve symptoms is unsuccessful.

Cervical spinal fusion, the most common surgical treatment performed to relieve symptoms, removes the damaged intervertebral disc and adheres together two or more vertebrae. Patients generally return to normal activities in a short period of time after surgery but range of motion is limited.

Cervical artificial disc surgery, a minimally invasive procedure also known as cervical disc arthroplasty, now provides many patients with an alternative to cervical spinal fusion. Using general anesthesia, a surgeon makes a small incision in the front of the neck with a technique similar to that used for spinal fusion. A narrow opening is created through the muscle to the cervical vertebrae. The disc material is removed and the artificial implant is inserted between the vertebrae. The cervical disc replacement surgery relieves symptoms and restores spinal stability and alignment. Patients generally return home one or two days after surgery, often resume regular activities more quickly and maintain range of motion.

Superior neurological and overall success outcomes in patients receiving the disc were reported by a recently concluded clinical trial. The study compared the clinical outcomes of a cervical artificial disc replacement to anterior cervical discectomy and fusion (spinal fusion) procedures.

Cervical Artificial Disc Replacement

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According to Angela Kerns, RN, BSN, CNOR, Director Perioperative & Invasive Cardiology Services, the staff is thrilled to be part of the exciting new procedure. “We pride ourselves in providing state of the art quality care to the residents of the Mahoning Valley.”

Availability of the artificial cervical disc at Northside Medical Center enhances the level of orthopedic care, as well as demonstrates a commitment to improve quality and clinical excellence. The facility received designation as a United Healthcare Premium Spine Specialty Center and Premium Total Joint Replacement Specialty Center, indicating the hospital meets or exceeds nationally recognized standards of care. Northside Medical Center also ranks among the top 10 in Ohio for overall orthopedic services according to HealthGrades, the nation’s leading independent healthcare ratings firm.

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Note to Media: Interviews can be arranged by contacting Debora Bishop at 330-884-4766 or 330-501-7746.