

# Vertebroplasty

## **Why is it done?**

A Vertebroplasty is a nonsurgical treatment performed by interventional radiologists using imaging guidance to repair vertebral compression fractures. It will help stabilize the collapsed vertebra with the injection of medical-grade bone cement into the spine. This reduces pain, and can prevent further collapse of the vertebra, thereby preventing the height loss and spine curvature commonly seen as a result of osteoporosis.

## **How to prepare**

You may be advised to stop taking medications called blood thinners prior to your procedure to reduce the risk of bleeding. Your medications should be reviewed with you by your physician at the time your test is scheduled and directions given as to what medications you need to stop taking and when. A nurse from the Radiology Department will call you the day before your procedure to instruct you on your arrival time to the hospital and further instructions to prepare for your test.

## **What to expect during the procedure**

You will be taken to the Radiology Area on a stretcher where you will meet with the Interventional Radiologist. He will explain the procedure and have you sign a consent form. A Radiology nurse will take you into an Angiography suite and have you lay on your stomach for the procedure. You will receive IV medications to relax you and to relieve the back pain. The Radiologist will use x-ray guidance to place a needle into the fracture of your back and then inject a cement mixture into the compression fracture.

The cement hardens almost immediately. The procedure will take approximately one hour. Once the procedure is complete you will have to roll on your back and be on bed rest for 2 to 4 hours before being discharged to home. You are not permitted to drive for 24 hours because of the sedation medicine, so you will need to arrange transportation to get you home at the time of your discharge.

### **What to expect after**

Most people experience pain relief from the fracture within 24 to 48 hours after the procedure. You are to rest for 24 hours and then slowly return to your normal activities. Some pain is expected at the site and you can take over the counter pain medication or your usual pain reliever as directed. We ask that you do not take Aspirin or Aspirin containing products for 24 hours after your procedure due to the risk of bleeding associated with Aspirin. We will see you back in our office in a month to evaluate your progress.