

Oblique Lumbar Interbody Fusion Understanding Your Risks

This document outlines the potential complications associated with **oblique lumbar interbody fusion (OLIF) with posterior pedicle screw fixation**. This is a spine procedure performed through a small incision in the side of the abdomen, allowing access to the lumbar spine through an oblique corridor between the abdominal contents and the psoas muscle. During the procedure, the disc is removed and a spacer (interbody cage) filled with bone graft is placed between the vertebrae to restore disc height, alignment, and stability. Supplemental stabilization is achieved through placement of screws and rods through small incisions in the back to provide additional support.

The usual purpose of surgery is to **relieve nerve compression, improve pain and neurologic symptoms, restore disc height, spinal stability and alignment, and promote solid fusion** in patients with conditions such as degenerative disc disease, spinal stenosis, spondylolisthesis, deformity, instability, or recurrent disc herniation.

Risks:

- **Neurologic complications** (new or worsened numbness, weakness, nerve injury, femoral or non-femoral neuropraxia, or cauda equina injury)
- **Transient neurologic symptoms** (thigh or groin pain, numbness, or weakness)
- **Persistent neurologic deficit**
- **Psoas muscle irritation or weakness**
- **Dural tear with cerebrospinal fluid leak**
- **Wound infection** (superficial or deep)
- **Pseudoarthrosis** (nonunion or failure of fusion)
- **Hardware complications** (screw or rod loosening, breakage, malposition, cage migration, or subsidence)
- **Graft-related complications**
- **Adjacent segment degeneration or disease**

- **All-cause reoperation**
- **Ileus or bowel dysfunction**
- **Visceral injury** (bowel, ureter)
- **Retroperitoneal or psoas hematoma**
- **Major vascular injury** (arterial or venous injury, bleeding)
- **Medical complications** (myocardial infarction, stroke, pneumonia, pulmonary embolism, deep vein thrombosis)
- **Death** (extremely rare)

Risk Factors for Increased Complications:

- **Higher number of lumbar levels fused**
- **Revision or prior lumbar spine surgery**
- **Advanced age and higher ASA class**
- **Medical comorbidities** (diabetes, tobacco use, obesity, osteoporosis)

Patient Acknowledgment: By signing below, the patient acknowledges understanding of the above risks associated with oblique lumbar interbody fusion with posterior fixation and all questions have been answered to the patient's satisfaction.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Patient Name: _____ DOB: _____

