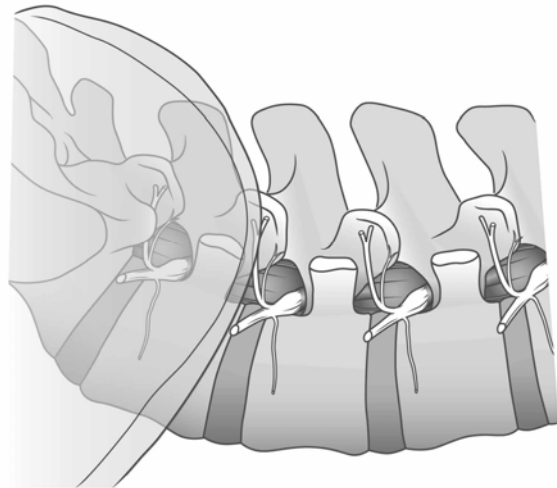

**THE CENTER FOR PAIN MEDICINE
MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL**

LUMBAR DISCOGRAM

Information Sheet for Patients

What is a discogram? The intervertebral discs help the spine support the weight of your body while still allowing movement between your vertebrae. A discogram is a diagnostic procedure used to determine if pain is coming from a specific disc(s) in your spine. The key diagnostic feature is a reproduction of the pain by injection into the disc(s) in your back.

What is the goal of discogram? The goal is strictly to determine if one or more of your intervertebral discs is causing your pain. A surgical procedure may be suggested based on the results of this test.



What happens before a treatment? You will be escorted to a procedure room where a nurse will conduct a pre-procedure interview. The pain specialist who will be performing the injection will review your medical history, previous image studies, physical exam and current medications.

What happens during the procedure? The patient remains awake during the entire process. Blood pressure, heart rate and breathing are continually monitored. Lying face down on the procedure table the injection site is cleansed with an antiseptic. This procedure involves inserting a needle through the skin, muscle and soft tissues, so there is some slight discomfort involved. An injection of local anesthetic (numbing medication) will be administered in the area where you are experiencing pain. The physician then directs a needle through the skin with the use of x-ray guidance and deposits the medication. This procedure takes approximately 30 minutes.