



ACDF

(Anterior Cervical Discectomy (Decompression) & Fusion)

Description: Cervical Fusion

Anterior cervical fusion (ACF) is a spinal fusion surgery in the neck, or cervical, spine. The surgeon makes an incision in the front of the neck. The contents of the neck are gently retracted, enabling the front part of the spine to be seen. Fluoroscopy is used to determine the correct level(s) before the disc material is removed and the fusion graft is inserted. A surgical plate is then screwed in place over the fusion level.

Conditions Treated with Cervical Fusion

Anterior Cervical Fusion is performed for the treatment of herniated, cervical spondylosis, kyphosis, cervical stenosis and myelopathy.

What to Expect During Cervical Fusion

- The surgeon makes an incision in the front part of the neck.
- Fluoroscopy (live X-ray) is used to determine the correct level(s) to be operated.
- The contents of the neck are gently retracted to the side so that the spine can be seen.
- Disc tissue is removed.
- A fusion cage is placed in the disc space.
- Often, a plate is screwed over the operated segment to hold the graft in place and stabilize the area.
- Surgery takes approximately 1-2 hours.

Why might I need an anterior cervical discectomy (decompression) and fusion?

Cervical spine surgery may be needed for a variety of problems. Generally, surgery may be performed for degenerative disorders, trauma or instability.

An ACDF is usually performed for one or more of the following reasons:

1. To treat pressure on the spinal cord (caused by cervical canal stenosis/spondylosis or an intervertebral disc prolapse).
2. To treat pressure on one or more spinal nerves in the neck (caused by foraminal stenosis, cervical spondylosis, or an intervertebral disc prolapse)
3. To treat instability of the cervical spine (this may occur due to degenerative changes, arthritis, or trauma).

Surgery is usually recommended when all reasonable conservative measures (pain medications, nerve sheath injections, physical therapies, neck collars etc.) have failed. In cases of significant instability or neurological problems, surgery may be the most appropriate first treatment option.

What is an anterior cervical discectomy (decompression) and fusion?

An anterior cervical discectomy (decompression) and fusion (ACDF) is an operation through the front of the neck to relieve pressure on the spinal cord and/or nerves, as well as to stabilize the spine.

It is abbreviated to 'ACDF', with each letter standing for:

A= Anterior	This means the operation is done from the front of the neck, rather than from the back.
C= Cervical	This refers to the neck.
D= Discectomy or Decompression	Usually a discectomy is performed, meaning removal of the intervertebral disc. Often, however, adjacent bone also needs to be removed in order to take the pressure off the nerves and correctly align the spine (when this is done, 'decompression' is a more correct term).
F= Fusion	This refers to the joining of two or more neck bones together at the end of the operation, in order to ensure stability.

For more information please visit our website: michiganneurospine.com