



A return to activity approach for back & neck patients

Philosophically, Dr. Steven Valentino has a conservative approach to the care of his patients and encourages non-surgical treatment first. This is in contrast to many other spine surgeons who may be biased toward spine surgery because of their limited experience with non-surgical treatment options.

Because Dr. Valentino is proficient with the use of spinal injections to relieve symptoms of a herniated disc, it enables him to explore non-surgical treatment options more so than other surgeons who aren't familiar with that specialty. Surgery is recommended as a last resort when non surgical options have failed to resolve symptoms.

Dr. Valentino and his caring staff have successfully helped many patients return to an active lifestyle with conservative care options. Dr. Valentino excels in designing patient specific treatment options.

The philosophy of the spine care team at Liberty Spine Care is that many patients will recover with rest, medication that reduces inflammation, core strengthening and spine-specialized physical therapy programs. We believe that quality healthcare comes from a well-informed patient who is educated to exhaust non-surgical treatment options first, and to understand the impact of their treatment decisions.

An emphasis on minimally invasive spine surgery

If nonsurgical treatment options do not relieve symptoms, Liberty Spine Care emphasizes minimally invasive spine surgery that reduces the length of the incision, lessens disruption to muscles and tendons, allows a shorter time in the hospital (patients often go home the same day) and a faster and less painful recovery. While many surgeons may market "minimally invasive surgery" in an effort to attract patients, unfortunately the patient may end up with a traditional, open spine surgery. When surgery is necessary and if a patient is a candidate for a minimally invasive procedure, Dr. Valentino prefers to use a minimally invasive technique for patient benefit. He is proficient in the following minimally invasive spine surgery techniques and others:

- Microdiscectomy
- Percutaneous posterior pedicle screw fixation
- Endoscopic Discectomy
- Posterior cervical microforaminotomy (PCMF)
- Anterior cervical discectomy
- Artificial cervical disc replacement
- Anterior lumbar interbody fusion (ALIF)
- Transforaminal lumbar interbody fusion (TLIF)
- Lateral interbody fusion (LIF)
- Laminectomy
- Laminotomy



Physician Profile

Steven Valentino, D.O.

*Board-certified orthopedic surgeon, Fellowship-trained spine surgeon
 Board-Certified American Board of Independent Medical Examiners
 Board-Certified American Academy of Disability Evaluating Physicians
 Trained in Independent Medical Examinations*

Dr. Steven Valentino is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon who is fellowship-trained in spine, which is the highest level of medical education possible in the United States.

The difference between a M.D. degree (Medical Doctor) and D.O. Degree (Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine) is that osteopathic doctors have additional training in the structure of the musculoskeletal system, including how movement or manipulation can in some cases relieve pain symptoms. Both M.D.s and D.O.s can prescribe medicine, and orthopedic surgeon M.D.s and D.O.s perform the same surgeries. Fellowship-training related to spine surgery is typically identical between both M.D. and D.O. degrees.

Dr. Valentino has practiced orthopedic surgery specializing in spine in the Philadelphia and South Jersey region for more than 25 years. Over that period, he has performed more than 5,000 successful spine surgeries. He was one of the first surgeons in the Philadelphia/South Jersey region to be trained in minimally invasive spine surgery and artificial disc replacement surgery.

Dr. Valentino completed his year-long spine fellowship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania - Presbyterian in Philadelphia in 1988. Before that, he completed a residency in orthopedic surgery where he was named "Chief Resident." During his hospital internship, he was named the "Intern of the Year."

Dr. Valentino fulfilled his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. He is a graduate of LaSalle College and Bishop Neumann High School, both in Philadelphia.

In addition to being a Board-Certified Orthopedic Surgeon, Dr. Valentino is also Board-Certified by the American Academy of Disability Evaluating Physicians, and Board-Certified by the American Board of Independent Medical Examiners. He is trained to perform Independent Medical Examinations and to provide Impairment Ratings related to on-the-job injury.

He has written dozens of professional papers and presentations for publication on the subjects of back and neck pain; back injury in the workplace; back injury in sports; non-surgical spine care options and spine surgery. He is licensed in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He is on the medical staff at the following hospitals:

- MainLine Health
- Mercy Suburban Hospital
- Bryn Mawr Hospital
- Kennedy Hospital
- Lankneau Hospital

Minimally invasive spine surgeries performed by Liberty Spine Care

MIS Lumbar Discectomy

A minimally invasive lumbar discectomy is when a herniated disc is removed in the lower back that pinches a nerve that may cause severe leg pain, numbness, or weakness. This procedure is done by making a small 1-inch incision over the herniated disc and inserting a tubular retractor. Then the surgeon removes a small amount of the lamina bone that allows the surgeon to view the spinal nerve and disc. Once the surgeon can view the spinal nerve and disc, the surgeon will retract the nerve, remove the damaged disc, and replaces it with bone graft material.

MIS Posterior Cervical Discectomy

A minimally invasive posterior cervical discectomy is when a herniated disc is removed in the back of the neck that pinches a nerve that may cause severe leg pain, numbness, or weakness. This procedure is done by making a small 1-inch incision over the herniated disc and inserting a tubular retractor. Then the surgeon removes a small amount of the lamina bone that allows the surgeon to view the spinal nerve and disc. Once the surgeon can view the spinal nerve and disc, the surgeon will retract the nerve, remove the damaged disc, and replace it with bone graft material.

MIS Lumbar Fusion

A minimally invasive lumbar fusion can be performed the same way as traditional open lumbar fusion, either from the back, through the abdomen, or from the side.

Lateral interbody fusion (LIF)

A lateral interbody fusion is performed by removing a disc and replacing it with a spacer that will fuse with the surrounding vertebra. The procedure is completed on the side of the body in order to reduce the effect on the nerves and muscle of the back. This procedure can be used to help treat various conditions such as spondylolysis, degenerative disc disease and herniated discs.

Endoscopic discectomy

An endoscopic discectomy is performed by making a tiny incision to insert a tiny camera, or endoscope, to remove part of a herniated disc that is applying pressure on spinal nerves.

Posterior cervical microforaminotomy (PCMF)

A PCMF is performed to help relieve pain pressure and discomfort in the spine by making a small incision in the back of the neck and removing excess scar tissue and bone graft material.

Anterior cervical discectomy

An anterior cervical discectomy is used to reduce pressure or discomfort in the neck by removing a herniated disc through a small incision in the front of the neck. The space is then filled with bone graft material and plates or screws may be used to increase stability.

Home Remedy Book

We provide a free 36-page Home Remedy Book that includes symptom charts that show when to see a doctor, home remedies and stretches that can relieve pain symptoms, and exercises that make the back stronger, more flexible and resistant to future strain.



Educational Website

We believe that the best healthcare comes from an educated healthcare consumer. Consequently we developed a content rich online spine encyclopedia that has symptom charts, home remedies, a library of exercises and stretches that relieve back and neck pain symptoms, an overview of various non-surgical treatment options along with videos that explain spine procedures. Visit it at LibertySpineCare.com



Liberty Spine Care and Artificial Disc Replacement

Artificial Disc Replacement is one of the most significant advances in the field of spine surgery. Just as artificial knees and artificial hips have revolutionized treatment of degenerated knee and hip joints, the artificial disc is designed to replace the function of a herniated and degenerated disc.

Dr. Valentino was one of the first spine surgeons in the Eastern Pennsylvania and South Jersey region to be trained in artificial disc

replacement. Currently, he performs artificial disc replacement surgery for herniated discs in the neck area (cervical spine area).

The key benefit of artificial disc surgery is to enable the spinal vertebrae to retain movement, as compared to traditional fusion surgery that locks two vertebrae in place, and can cause additional stress to the disc levels above and below the fusion.