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WHEN IT COMES TO BACK PAIN “LESS IS MORE”

More surgery, more drugs, and more injections are not what the doctor ordered.

Tallahassee, Florida, May 27, 2008 – When it comes to chronic back pain management patients should know that “*more is less and less is more.*” The American Pain Society recently unveiled the second part of a practice guideline for the management of low back pain. Part 1 of the guidelines, published in the Annals of Internal Medicine in October 2007, focused on non-surgical interventions for low back pain. Part 2 of the guidelines took a look at the research supporting invasive procedures for the treatment of chronic low back. The scientific review concluded that most invasive interventions, including spinal joint injections, radiofrequency denervation, and intradiscal electrothermal therapy demonstrated no evidence of effectiveness. Furthermore, surgical procedures for chronic low back pain demonstrated only small improvement in pain and disability but were accompanied by considerable risk.

"The expert panel reaffirms its previous recommendation that all low-back pain patients stay active and talk honestly with their physicians about self care and other interventions. "In general, non-invasive therapies supported by evidence showing benefits should be tried before considering interventional therapies or surgery," said Dr. Roger Chou." Physical therapy, including spinal manipulation and exercise, was noted as a centerpiece component of effective low back pain care by the panel's 2007 study.

"The American Pain Society panel has acknowledged the central role of an active physical therapy program in managing low back pain patients," noted Timothy W. Flynn PT, PhD, President of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapists. "The key in chronic low back pain is avoiding too much medicine. There is no magic bullet, but a combination of hands-on care and an active exercise offer the best solution."

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