

DR. ROLANDO GARCIA Performs First Disc Replacement Surgery in The State of Florida

Aventura, FL

Orthopedic Spine Surgeon Dr. Rolando Garcia, Jr., performed the first Disc Replacement surgery in the state of Florida on May 31, 2000 at Aventura Hospital and Medical Center. The artificial disc, which was implanted in three patients meeting very particular criteria, is being studied as an alternative to fusing together the vertebrae surrounding a damaged disc. Aventura Hospital and Medical Center is the fourth institution in the United States where this procedure has been performed and is one of ten medical centers in the nation taking part in the investigational device exemption study approved by the Federal Drug Administration.

The study sponsor is LINK Spine Group, Inc. with Executive Offices located in Connecticut. Disc Replacement surgery, developed to aid those who suffer from debilitating back pain and are unresponsive to non-operative treatment, involves removing and replacing injured discs with metal and plastic prosthesis, which allow for motion. The procedure is performed through the front of the spine, avoiding the need to damage the back muscles in order to expose the injured disc, and lasts approximately two hours. The unique advantage to this procedure is that it maintains motion, potentially saving the discs located above and below fusion from wearing out prematurely.



"I am very excited to be the first spine surgeon in Florida to perform the disc replacement surgery," said Dr. Garcia. "I strongly believe this procedure has the potential to become widely practiced throughout the world, due to its ability to dramatically improve function, while maintaining mobility, in the patient."

This artificial disc was introduced by German manufacturer Waldemar Link in 1987 and has been available in Argentina, Australia, China, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for more than a decade. The disc has been implanted in more than 2,000 patients abroad and is now being studied in the United States for its safety and efficacy. For additional information concerning this new procedure, please call Dr. Garcia's Office at (305) 937-1999 or Amy Erez, Director of Public Relations at Aventura Hospital and Medical Center, at (305) 682-7127.