

Treatment of herniated lumbar disc by intradiscal and intraforaminal oxygen-ozone (O2-O3) injection.

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MATERIAL: We report our experience between May 1996 and May 2003 with 2200 patients affected by low back pain or sciatica due to herniated disk treated by intradiscal and intraforaminal oxygen-ozone injection. The patients received medical and physical therapy before treatment for at least 2 months; the patients with conus-cauda syndrome and hyperalgesic sciatica were excluded. We never performed discography before the treatment that was performed under CT guidance or fluoroscopy. CT provided monitoring of gas distribution in the disk and epidural space. **RESULTS:** No side effects were recorded at short and long-term follow-up. Clinical results were evaluated with the modified McNab method showing an 80% success rate and 20% failure rate in 1750 patients followed up to 6 months while the success rate dropped down at 75% and failure increased at 25% in 1400 followed up to 18 months. CT showed reduction in the size of the herniated disk in only 63% of the followed patients (420 patients). The failure has been mostly related to: calcified herniated disk; spinal canal stenosis; recurrent herniated disk with epidural fibrosis; small descending herniated disk at the level of the lateral recess. Copyright 2004 Masson, Paris

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