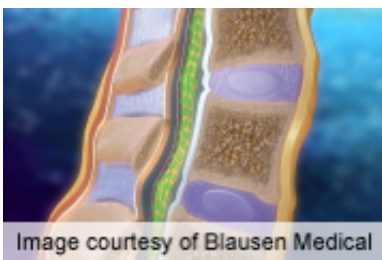


# Decompression surgery linked to reduced risk of falls

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(HealthDay)—Decompression surgery in patients with lumbar spinal stenosis cuts their risk of falls, compared to similar patients utilizing nonsurgical interventions, according to a study published in the July 2 issue of *The Journal of Bone & Joint Surgery*.

Byung Ho Lee, M.D., from Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea, and colleagues assessed the effect of medical treatment and decompression [surgery](#) on the risk of patients with [lumbar spinal stenosis](#) falling. A surgery group (76 patients) and a nonoperative group (50 patients) were evaluated for risk of falling using four functional mobility tests: the Alternate-Step test, Six-Meter Walk test, Sit-to-Stand test, and timed "Up & Go" test.

The researchers found that the results of the Alternate-Step test significantly improved during the follow-up period in the surgery group

( $P = 0.001$ ) and significantly worsened in the nonoperative group ( $P = 0.001$ ). The surgery group also showed significant improvement for the Six-Meter Walk test one year postoperatively ( $P = 0.042$ ) and for the timed "Up & Go" test at three months and one year ( $P = 0.046$  and  $0.000$ , respectively). Both groups showed improvement in the Oswestry Disability Index and the EuroQoL-5D visual analog scale scores. Age, surgery, and the presence of an osteoporotic compression fracture significantly affected the test results related to the risk of falling ( $P < 0.05$ ). "Improved physical performance, including walking and balancing, after decompression lumbar [spinal surgery](#) reduces the future risk of falling," the authors write.

**More information:** [Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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