



**Jack E. Marshall, M.D.**

**Scott A. Mitchell, D.O.**

405.775.9355

## Oklahoma Interventional Pain Management

### DISCOGRAM

Disks are donut-like structures located between the vertebrae throughout the spine. Their function is to allow movement and absorb shock. Injuries to the disk can produce severe pain.

A discogram is a diagnostic test that involves pressurizing a disk by injecting contrast dye into the center of the disk. The purpose of the procedure is to assess the internal structure of a disk and determine if it is a source of pain. It is common to have disk findings on an MRI that are asymptomatic (do not cause pain.)

A discogram is performed as an outpatient procedure. Local anesthetic and IV pain medication are used to make the procedure more comfortable. However, because increasing pressure in a disk can reproduce a person's pain, this can be a painful procedure. Fluoroscopy (x-ray) is used to guide needle placement in the disk and visualize the disk as the x-ray contrast dye is injected. Your doctor may order a CT scan immediately after a discogram to take a picture of your disks inflated with dye. Your pain may increase for up to two weeks after a discogram, but most patients are able to return to normal activities within 3 to 4 days. The procedure should be performed only by a physician who has received specialized training in performing discograms. A discogram gives useful diagnostic information to help you and your physician decide whether or not you are a candidate for additional treatment, including surgery.