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INTRADISCAL ELECTROTHERMAL ANNULOPLASTY

Intradiscal Electrothermal Annuloplasty is an advanced intervention that is indicated for central back pain in select patients. It is designed to be a less invasive option to lumbar disc fusion or disectomy for discogenic pain. Discogenic pain is often related to pain caused by tears in the annular wall (outside ligamentous wall) of the disc. The disc itself can cause pain, but also new nerve fibers can grow into the tears in a disc, causing centralized back pain.

Intradiscal Electrothermral Annuloplasty involves introducing a flexible catheter (using live x-ray) into the disc. The catheter is then heated to destroy painful nerve endings and shrink loose ligaments to reseal the disc. Although the entire procedure is performed through a hollow needle and no incision is made, there is still a recovery period which may last several months. The patient is required to wear a back brace, use a muscle stimulator, and limit activities. A rigid physical therapy program is included to maximize the benefit from this procedure.