

Spondylolisthesis is a permanent condition of the low back

Question: My nephew was recently diagnosed with spondylolithesis. He is only 15 years old and I am concerned. What is spondylolisthesis and how will it effect him?

Answer: Spondylolisthesis is a bilateral non-fusion or fracture of the lateral joints of the lumbar spine. With forward displacement there are 4 degrees of displacement. "4" being paralyzed and "1" and "2" functional. A younger person – 15 years of age – will eventually develop a natural fusion of the joints but with the displacement. The symptoms range from discomfort in the low back, asymptomatic without ever having a problem, to chronic pain, sciatica and pelvic organic dysfunctions and in severe cases paralysis and lack of sensation.

Spondylolisthesis is a common anomaly of the lumbar spine and is caused by birth defect, birth trauma, or a strong force jolting the lumbar spine forward from back to front. Example: A football player getting a helmet into their low back while being tackled. The younger the patient with spondylolisthesis or spondylolysis (fracture of lateral joints without forward displacement) the greater chance they will adapt in time. During the initial stages of injury it is imperative to immobilize and stabilize the lumbar spine. This means no physical activities for 6 to 8 weeks. An MRI, CT scan or four-view lumbar X-ray series including two oblique views to observe the facets should be taken at the time of injury and then 3 to 6 months later to monitor progress.

Chiropractic care is an excellent option for supporting recovery and healing.

Quote of the week: *“Every job is a self portrait of the person who did it.*

Autograph your wok with quality.” – Anonymous

