

Facet Joint Syndrome

What is FJS?

Facet joints are located throughout the posterior (back) aspects of the entire spine. These joints provide flexibility and stability to the spine. They can be a source of pain when excessive extension activities are performed. The pain is associated with inflammation and is called facet joint syndrome.

What causes FJS?

The causes of facet joint syndrome can be acute or chronic: years of overloading these joints; sudden misjudged movements; or trauma to the area. The capsule which surrounds the joint may become trapped within the joint, causing severe pain. There may be a fracture of one of the bones making up this joint, or there may be bleeding within the joint itself. Facet joint syndrome is most commonly seen in the lumbar (lower) spine, but may occur throughout the spine. The cervical (neck) facet joints are often injured in whiplash type injuries.

Treatment

Treatment initially consists of methods to reduce inflammation and spasm around the joint. Chiropractic adjustments are then used to normalize motion in the joint and restore optimal function.

