



MAYFIELD
Brain & Spine

MayfieldClinic.com

University of Cincinnati
Department of Neurosurgery

Mayfield
Imaging Center

Mayfield
Spine Institute

Precision
Radiotherapy

Spine
Surgery Center

Mayfield
Foundation

Facet Joint Degeneration: A Common Cause of Back Pain — What Comes Next?

Robert Whitten, MD

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation



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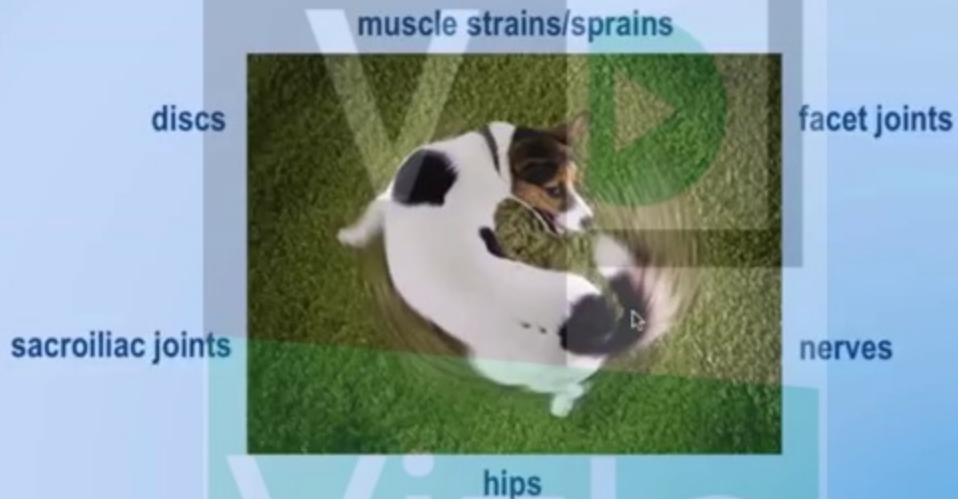
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Interrelation of Causes



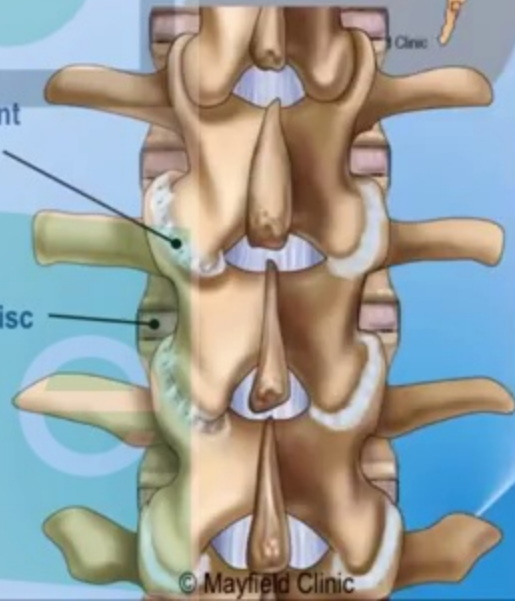
Complex: '*dog chasing his tail*' = many different 'links' in the generation of back pain

Lumbar Facet Joints

- In low back, facets are more massive, oriented more at an angle and 'nested' with the top part of the joint fitting inside the lower part

facet joint capsule

disc



Procedures

Interventions are always diagnostic
and potentially therapeutic

- **Myofascial (muscle) Injections**
- **Epidural Steroid Injections**
- **Facet Joint Injections**
- **Sacroiliac Injections**
- **Hip joint injection**
(mimic for back pain)

Nerve block injection test

- Diagnostic test for radiofrequency ablation
- Anesthetic injected along the pathway of the medial branch sensory nerve
- Pain relief confirms the joint is pain source





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