

Herniated Disc, Ruptured Disc, Slipped Disc, Extruded Disc-- What's The Difference

Herniated disc, ruptured disc, extruded disc, what is the difference? Pretty much, they are all the same. Some of the terms describe greater severity of herniation, but if you have a herniated disc, you have a herniated disc. On the spectrum of herniations usually we describe bulging disc is more or less normal and okay. Herniated disc is where the central portion of the disc comes out and that ultimately can get bigger and become loose and the fragment becomes free, that's called an extrusion and sometimes even described as a loose fragment. But frequently patients even with a small herniated disc have symptoms that are worse than patients with an extruded fragment. So usually the patients that have an extruded fragment feel better because it sounds worse but I have seen a lot of patients with just a regular herniated disc having a lot of symptoms of pain, numbness, and tingling. There is also a term called slipped disc. We do not usually use the term slipped disc but that means herniated disc same thing, herniated disc, slipped disc, extruded disc all the same. So pick the diagnosis that makes you feel the best, usually people with extruded herniated discs like to have that because it sounds horrible but this idea of a loose fragment or it is like a pedal in a car, that's not happening. You can _____ a loose fragment but it just means that the disc, the central portion of the disc has come out a little bit. It is free and it is putting pressure on the nerves and that's what we call a loose fragment. So herniated disc, extruded, free fragment, pretty much all the same, it means you got a herniated disc and you have got to get the appropriate treatment to hopefully make you get better with time.

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