

# Dr. Tyndall's Spine "Cheat Sheet"

## Spine Abbreviations Worth Knowing from P to X (Part 3)

1. **PLIF: Posterior Lumbar Interbody Fusion**  
A lumbar fusion performed between the vertebrae and through an approach from the back of the spine.
2. **PLF/PLI: Posterior Lumbar Fusion/Posterior Lumbar Instrumentation**  
Usually refers to a traditional lumbar fusion with screws/rods performed through a relatively large incision from the back of the spine. The fusion is along the transverse processes.
3. **RFA: Radiofrequency Ablation**  
A procedure by which nerves to a spinal facet joint are destroyed or ablated with an electrical device to relieve pain from that joint.
4. **ROM: Range of Motion**  
A description of the limits of the motion of a particular joint.
5. **SCS: Spinal Cord Stimulation**  
By which an electrical device is placed on the spinal cord to send electrical impulses up the spine to the brain to relieve pain.
6. **SSEP: Somatosensory Evoked Potential**  
A test usually used during surgery by which electrical signals are sent up the spinal cord to the brain to monitor the nerve pathways for pressure, touch, pain, and temperature.
7. **TRD/ADR: Total Disc Replacement/Artificial Disc Replacement**  
A procedure by which a damaged disc is replaced by a mechanical device which replicates the function of the disc therefore maintaining motion.
8. **TENS: Transcutaneous Electrical Neural Stimulation**  
A device which sends small electrical stimuli across the skin to the nerve endings and ultimately to the brain in order to relieve pain.
9. **TLIF: Trans-foraminal Lumbar Interbody Fusion**  
A lumbar fusion performed through the neuroforamina (this is the opening through which the nerve roots leave the spine).
10. **TON: Third Occipital Nerve**  
This is the sensory nerve from the C3 nerve that supplies the C2/3 facet joint and an area of skin at the base of the skull. It is believed that blocking this nerve will relieve headaches caused by arthritis in the C2/3 facet joint.
11. **XLIF: Extra Lateral Lumbar Interbody Fusion**  
A lumbar fusion performed through an approach from the side of the patient.

Dwight Tyndall, M.D.  
Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery  
730 45<sup>th</sup> Street • Munster, IN 46321 • 219.924.3300  
10200 Wicker Avenue • St. John, IN 46373 • 219.924.3300