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**Palm Beach Spine & Pain Institute | *Innovative Solutions to Pain Management***  
**Lawrence Gorfine, M.D. Douglas MacLear, D.O. Board Certified | Anesthesiology & Pain Management**

## **Construction Injuries—Effective Pain Management and Rapid Care**

Summer is in full swing; it's the busiest season for the construction industry and painful injuries abound. More than 7.3 million people (approximately 6% of the nation's work force) work in the US construction industry and painful and debilitating construction injuries are a leading source of occupational injury.

There is a direct link between effective pain management and rapid care following an injury. According to Lawrence Gorfine, M.D., Board Certified in Anesthesiology and Pain Management and co-founder of Palm Beach Spine & Pain Institute, effective Pain Management for injuries can depend upon rapid care following the injury. "It is essential that patients seek rapid treatment after an injury in order to limit the inflammatory processes that can lead to chronic pain and disability," says Dr. Gorfine.

Inflammation occurs rapidly in the acute stage following an injury, quickly building up as the body attempts to neutralize toxins and begin the repair process. Pain can escalate after the acute phase of an injury, and continue as a result of damaged tissue and other injuries, and if not treated, can often lead to inflammatory conditions known as chronic pain.

Common construction related injuries include slip and fall accidents, crane and scaffolding accidents, welding rod accidents and dangerous or defective equipment accidents. Other causes of accidents are vehicular injuries while operating vehicles and machinery or from driving to and from the workplace.

By far, the most common accident at construction sites is a fall, either on the same level or from significant height. While the most serious construction injuries are caused by falling from great heights, strained or sprained arms, legs, and backs are very common construction injuries; usually a result of lifting heavy objects. In fact, the back is the part of the body most frequently injured at work accounting for nearly 25 percent of all work-related injuries.

### **Effective diagnosis and pain management techniques**

Over the last twenty years, many chemical and anatomic pain pathways have been identified and studied, helping to diagnose and treat painful injuries. The Board Certified

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Anesthesiologist and Pain Medicine Specialist can perform diagnostic injections, usually with enhanced fluoroscopic guidance, to isolate and confirm the source of the patient's pain. Once identified, these painful structures are medically treated.

Epiduroscopy is the insertion of a fiber optic filament through a needle directly into the spine. This is connected to a television monitor to visualize the inside of the spinal canal, spinal cord and spinal nerves. This procedure has been effective in making accurate diagnosis, accomplishing precise injections, cutting of epidural adhesions and scar tissue and in the removal of toxins liberated by injured discs.

Pioneering pain management techniques performed by Board Certified Pain Management physicians include highly specific injection procedures eliminating pain at its source by isolating the nerve ending to the painful spot. Medication can be injected at the exact site of the injury or compressive lesion, eliminating the pain and allowing the injured party to return to a level of previous activity.

### **How many are injured in Construction Accidents?**

According to the National Center for Personal Injury Protection and Control, one out of every 10 US construction workers is accidentally injured every year. In 2003, 400,000 people suffered construction accident injuries so severe that they were forced to miss work that same year.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2005 a total of 4.2 million injuries and illnesses were reported in private industry workplaces, and about 2.2 million of these required days off work or restricted duties.

### **Who Pays for Care when a Worker is Injured?**

According to the Insurance Information Institute (III), nine out of 10 people in the nation's workforce are protected by workers compensation insurance, which is required for nearly all employees. Injured workers receive all approved medically necessary and appropriate treatment from the first day of injury or illness.

Treatment will be provided at no cost to the injured for medically necessary care approved and provided by authorized health care providers. Approved treatment can include doctor appointments, diagnostic testing, surgery, hospital and physician care, mileage reimbursement to and from all medical providers, and any other medical items or treatment ordered by your authorized physician.

Rather than simply administering pain medication, Board Certified Interventional Pain Management physicians diagnose the sources of pain and provide immediate pain relief through minimally invasive techniques. These techniques arrest the inflammatory process and limit further tissue damage, returning the injured structure to normal function. Board Certified Pain Management Physicians are an important resource for the both the patient

and the employer, helping the injured quickly return to productive employment and pre-injury activity levels.

Want more information about Board Certified minimally invasive pain management procedures designed to get you back to feeling like yourself minus the pain? Visit <http://www.helpain.com>

Palm Beach Spine & Pain Institute founders, Lawrence Gorfine, M.D. and Douglas MacLear, D.O. are Board Certified in Anesthesiology and Pain Management. To contact the doctors or schedule an appointment visit [www.helpain.com](http://www.helpain.com)