



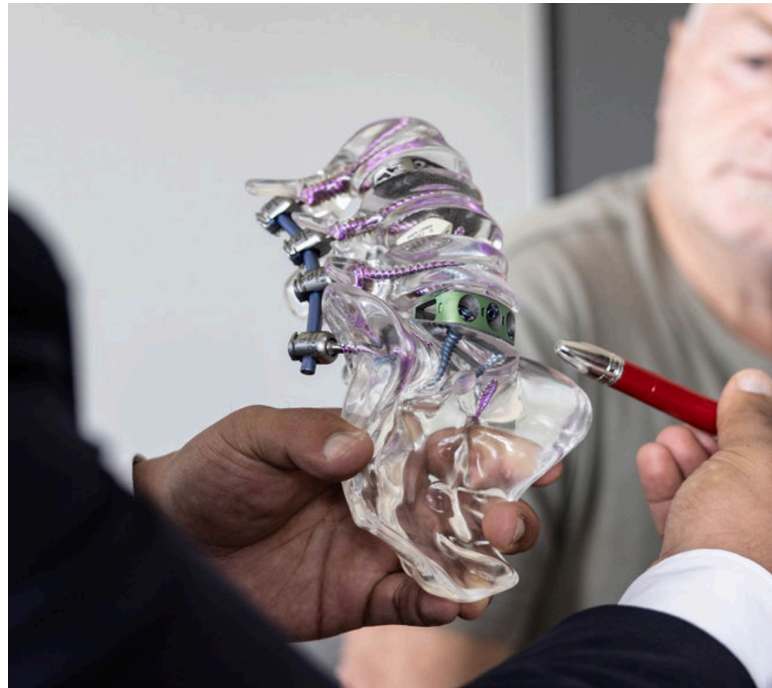
Dr Shanu Gambhir

Neurosurgeon & Spine Surgeon

MBChB, MS, FRACS
Provider Number 297896JH

ANTERIOR LUMBAR INTERBODY FUSION (ALIF)

PATIENT BROCHURE



Indication for Surgery

ALIF is a procedure where the spine is accessed from the front (abdomen) to remove disc or bone material between two lumbar vertebrae. This approach helps relieve pressure on nerves and stabilise the spine. It can be done via open surgery or minimally invasive techniques.

Surgical Procedure

Performed under general anaesthetic, a 7–10 cm incision is made in the abdomen. The abdominal muscles are moved aside, and the abdominal contents and major blood vessels are gently retracted. The damaged disc is removed and replaced with a cage substitute bone graft. A Vascular surgeon may assist with mobilising the large blood vessels.

I use voice recognition dictation which may account for occasional spelling / grammar errors.



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Risks

Although safe and commonly performed, risks may include:

- Infection, bleeding, CSF leak, nerve injury, implant-related complications
- Vascular injury, bowel/bladder injury, retrograde ejaculation (Males)
- General risks: DVT, UTI, chest infection, PE, heart attack, stroke

Discharge and Home Care

Patients are usually discharged 5–7 days after surgery, once reviewed by a physiotherapist. Rehabilitation may be needed and will be arranged before going home. Pain is managed with oral medications. Restart any stopped medications like blood thinners only with your surgeon's advice.

Avoid lifting, twisting, or bending. No swimming for 3 weeks. No heavy lifting for 12 weeks. Continue prescribed physiotherapy exercises. Do not drive while on narcotics. Start with short trips and build up gradually. Expect to take 4–6 weeks off work depending on your role.

Wound Care

The wound is closed with dissolvable stitches and supported by sticky paper strips. Keep the wound covered for one week and change the dressing daily after showering. After one week, you may remove the dressing and allow the strips to fall off naturally over 1–2 weeks. Healing may take longer in patients with diabetes, on steroids, or with immune system issues. See your GP if you notice redness, swelling, discharge, or pain at the wound site.

Follow-Up

Dr. Shanu Gambhir will see you about six weeks after surgery, with an X-ray for review.

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