

**This document provides an overview and rationale for this project and a summary of the steps for accessing the DISCOGENIC DATA SET.**

Transparency in research has become increasingly important in the scientific community. This project is a collaboration between The Spine Journal (Editor Gene Carragee) and the authors of an article published in The Spine Journal.

*Mirza SK, Deyo RA, Heagerty PJ, Turner JA, Martin BI, Comstock BA. One-year outcomes of surgical versus nonsurgical treatments for discogenic back pain: a community-based prospective cohort study. Spine J. 2013.*

The Authors and Dr. Carragee have agreed to provide the raw data to interested researchers who might wish to confirm the study results or investigate different hypotheses or to academics who would like to use the data for instructional purposes (e.g., in a statistics class to provide “real world” data to improve analysis skills).

The Center for Surgical Innovation: Dartmouth (CSID) and the Multidisciplinary Clinical Research Center (MCRC) for Musculoskeletal Diseases at Dartmouth have agreed to host these data and to provide limited support to those wishing to access these data.

The process for accessing these data is as follows.

1. Go to the web site associated with this project: <http://med.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/csi/data-sets.html>
2. Download the following documents
  - a. This Overview
  - b. The Project and Evaluation Proposal Form
  - c. The Data Dictionary
  - d. The Data use Agreement Form
3. Complete the **Research or Evaluation Proposal Form** and submit it to the MCRC
4. The MCRC methodological core will evaluate the proposal and either accept the proposal as is, suggest revisions, or reject the proposal. The primary reason for proposal rejection would be if the proposal is to evaluate a novel hypothesis when another group has already had a proposal approved that addresses this same hypothesis. Projects with the same goal of re-evaluating or confirming the results presented in the original paper would, as a general rule, be accepted.
5. Once the project has been approved, the submitting group must provide separate signed data use agreements (DUAs) for each investigator. If the project is academic – meaning that the data will be used for educating students in analysis methods – then only the instructor(s) will need to provide DUAs, but note that a condition of the DUA is that all users of the data, which in this case would include students, need to understand and adhere to the conditions of the DUA.
6. Upon receiving all materials, the MCRC will provide the principal investigator of the project with the data and a statistical program consistent with their request that will read the data file and create a single fully documented data set.
7. This data set may well need to be modified to allow for appropriate analysis of the questions of interest. If the research group is struggling to re-structure the data to allow a particular analysis, the MCRC methodological core should be contacted for support. Relatively straightforward restructuring will be provided at no cost to the researcher group. However, if the restructuring is complex, meaning several hours of statistical programmer time will be required, a fee for conducting the pre-analysis restructuring will be discussed.