



**PRESS RELEASE
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**McAllen Surgeon First in Valley to Use Adult Stem Cells in Back Surgery
*New technology eliminates moral dilemma, creates perfect patient matches***

(McAllen, TX August 8, 2008) — A McAllen doctor has begun using adult stems cells in spine surgeries, and calls the new technique the first major breakthrough in the industry in more than 100 years.

Dr. Ray R. "Trey" Fulp, III, a Spine and Pediatric Orthopedic Surgeon with the South Texas Back Institute of McAllen, recently began utilizing a new procedure that uses stem cells from a patient's own body to accelerate bone healing. The stem cells are harvested, concentrated and implanted back into the body to regenerate needed tissues, offering a new form of relief to patients with severe back pain.

"This is the first major breakthrough in more than 100 years in this industry," Dr. Fulp said. "The fact that it utilizes adult stem cells – as opposed to embryonic cells – eliminates any moral dilemma. It is the magic bullet we've been searching for."

The innovative procedure is referred to as Fusionary™. Dr. Fulp is utilizing this new process created by Austin-based biomedical technology company, SpineSmith Partners LP. SpineSmith designs, develops and markets implants and biologics for surgical fixation and correction and is leading the way in commercializing adult stem cell technologies for tissue regeneration.

Dr. Fulp is the first surgeon in the Rio Grande Valley use Fusionary™ and has performed approximately 15 procedures. Patients have already started lining up, with approximately five new patients a week slated to receive such surgery.

"The Fusionary system brings new hope to this field and I finally have an alternative tool that is a safe and effective option for my spinal procedures," Fulp said.

The procedure takes place at the McAllen Medical Center, which is effectively establishing themselves as the leader of cutting edge surgical procedures that utilize a patient's own adult stem cells to regenerate tissue.

Adult stem cells have the remarkable potential to differentiate and become new tissue forming cells in a variety of pathologies including bone, tendon, and cartilage and heart muscle. The potential of stem cells in regenerative medicine is virtually limitless and is being studied for a host of treatments throughout the world today. In addition, now the technology is available to procure adult stem cells from bone marrow and adipose tissue without challenging ethical issues associated with embryonic stem cells.

Disorders of the spine are one of the largest public health problems in the U.S., according to the World Research Group. As the population ages, incidents of spinal degeneration will likely continue to increase. This puts pressure on the healthcare system to maintain technological development and reduce the costs of procedures. The South Texas Back Institute recognizes this growing challenge and sees Fusionary™ as a cutting edge solution.

About South Texas Back Institute

The South Texas Back Institute serves families in the Rio Grande Valley and Hidalgo County area. Dr. Ray "Trey" Fulp specializes in spinal reconstructive surgery, limb and spine deformities such as scoliosis, gait abnormalities, bone and joint infections, fractures and pediatric orthopedic injuries. The South Texas Back Institute offers in-house MRI scans. Dr. Fulp is board certified with the American Osteopathic Board of Orthopedic Surgery and the American Board of Spinal Surgery. Dr. Fulp is bilingual. For more information, call 956.668.7746.

About SpineSmith Partners, LP

SpineSmith Partners LP designs, develops and markets implants and biologics for surgical fixation, correction and tissue regeneration of the spine. The company focuses on development of truly innovative biological and hardware technologies for use in the treatment of patients with spinal disorders. Fusionary™ is a product by SpineSmith, an Austin, Texas-based company. For more information, visit: www.spinesmithusa.com or call 512.206.0770.

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