

Partial lateral corpectomy

A **partial lateral corpectomy** is a surgical **procedure** in which a portion of the **vertebral body** (the corpectomy part) is removed from the lateral side (the side of the vertebra). This operation is typically performed to decompress the **spinal cord** or **nerve roots** in cases where there is significant pressure, such as from a herniated disc, tumor, or degenerative disease. It is often done in the cervical or thoracic spine and may be combined with other procedures like **spinal fusion** to provide stability after removing part of the vertebral body. The procedure helps relieve symptoms like pain, numbness, or weakness caused by nerve compression while preserving the surrounding structures.

The aim of a study was to describe the safety and effectiveness of thoracic or lumbar partial lateral corpectomy (PLC) in **cats** with **spinal cord compression** due to **intervertebral disc herniation** (IVH).

Methods: A retrospective study was conducted of 12 client-owned cats from two academic and one private referral veterinary centres. Cross-sectional imaging was available in 12 cats for evaluation of disc herniation. Nine cats had postoperative imaging for evaluation of slot creation and decompression. Neurological examination was performed for assessment of pre- and postoperative status. Complications were evaluated.

Results: Seven cats had severe (>50%), four moderate (>20 to <50%) and one mild (<20%) spinal cord compression on cross-sectional imaging. IVH occurred at Th12-13 in five cases, at L1-2 in two cases and at Th3-4, Th13-L1, L4-5 and L5-6 in one case each. After PLC, two cats had insufficient decompression (>20% remaining spinal cord compression), five had good decompression (<20% remaining spinal cord compression) and complete decompression (normal shape of the spinal cord) was achieved in two cats. Outcomes included five cats with an excellent result, three with significant improvement, one with mild improvement and three cats that died intra- or postoperatively due to extensive intraoperative bleeding. One cat was euthanased as a result of neurological deterioration 5 months postoperatively. The median follow-up period was 13.2 months (range 0 days to 84 months).

Conclusions and relevance: PLC in cats offers a potential treatment option for IVH to decompress the spinal cord. Fatal haemorrhage associated with this surgery is a significant risk, as occurred in 25% of the cats in this study. Surgeons should especially be aware of the potential for intraoperative haemorrhage and the need for sufficient slot creation to achieve sufficient spinal cord decompression and avoid complications ¹⁾.

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Tyroller F, Wennemuth J, Forterre F, Flegel T, Markert C, Kiefer I, Wunderlin N. Retrospective study of partial lateral corpectomy to treat thoracic and lumbar intervertebral disc herniation in 12 cats. J Feline Med Surg. 2024 Dec;26(12):1098612x241299276. doi: 10.1177/1098612x241299276. PMID: 39720880.

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