

Minimally Invasive Posterior Lumbar Interbody Fusion (PLIF)

October 7, 2003 - Innovative
Spinal Surgery to be Featured in Internet Broadcast from Wake Forest
University Baptist Medical Center

A new minimally
invasive approach to spinal surgery will be broadcast live o-n the
internet at 5 pm EDT o-n Tuesday, October 7 from Wake Forest University
Baptist Medical Center. The surgery, a posterior lumbar interbody
fusion (PLIF), will employ a new tubular retraction method that
requires o-nly a small skin incision and "splits" the muscle covering
the spine to create a small portal through which surgeons can repair
the spinal damage.

Charles L. Branch Jr., M.D., Professor and
Chair of Neurosurgery at Wake Forest, who helped to adapt the minimally
invasive technique - known as METRx - for PLIF, will perform the
surgery. "The METRx minimally invasive technology is useful for most
herniated disc surgery, in both the cervical and lumbar areas," Branch
said. "And we are developing its use in the treatment of tumors,
fractures and other spine pathologies."

For the surgery in
October, Dr. Branch will use an innovative device called a Sextant
(because it looks like a navigational sextant), that requires o-nly
o-ne additional skin puncture to set a titanium rod that anchors the
two vertebrae. Both the METRx and Sextant systems are products of
Medtronic Sofamor Danek, with whom Branch has collaborated extensively
over the past several years. The company will be a sponsor of the
October webcast. CME credit available.

To Access Broadcast: www.or-live.com/wfubmc/1142