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For Immediate Release

NEUROSTIMULATION: OPTION FOR CHRONIC BACK PAIN SPINE IMPLANT OFFERED AT PAIN MANAGEMENT CENTER AT OVERLOOK HOSPITAL

SUMMIT, NJ, NOVEMBER 6, 2007 - Pain is the body's natural response to harm or possible damage. Pain occurs when special nerve endings, called pain receptors, are turned on because of illness or injury or when chemical changes within the body indicate that body tissues are damaged. When a pain receptor is turned on, it triggers the release of chemicals that sends a signal to the brain. The signal travels within the spinal cord to the brain, which recognizes the signal as pain.

When pain lasts for a long time, it is called chronic pain. This type of pain is often caused by illness or injury. And it is complicated because the source of the pain is often unknown.

Chronic pain is difficult to treat because it varies so much from person to person. Even two people with the same kind of pain may need different treatments. Chronic pain is also problematic because it can change frequently—from day to day, week to week, and month to month. It can even change hourly, depending on your activity, mood, stress level, and general health.

Until recently, chronic pain sufferers had very few treatment options. Now, thanks to advances in medicine and technology, more treatment options are available. A newer discipline in medicine, called Pain Management, provides more pain relief options.

At the [Pain Management Center at Overlook Hospital](#), the focus is on finding a solution for your pain.

An innovative implant called neurostimulation or spinal cord stimulation (SCS) is an excellent source of relief for many chronic back pain sufferers. Neurostimulation generates mild electrical pulses and sends them to your spinal cord or targeted peripheral nerve to block the sensation of pain. One theory, the Gate Control Theory of pain, proposes that neurostimulation activates the body's pain inhibitory system. According to this theory, there is a gate in the spinal cord that controls the flow of pain signals to the brain. The theory suggests that the body can inhibit these pain signals or "close the gate" by activating certain pain-inhibiting nerve fibers in the spinal cord.

The neurostimulation, or SCS, works a lot like a pacemaker. It is implanted near the lower spine, stimulates the pain-inhibiting nerve fibers, masking the sensation of pain and replacing it with a tingling or massaging sensation.

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Neurostimulation may be the appropriate treatment for the management of certain chronic pain conditions, including failed back syndrome, complex regional pain syndrome, and arachnoiditis among others.

A dedicated pain management specialist, such as at The Pain Management Center at Overlook Hospital, is best equipped to help patients diagnose and treat chronic back pain and determine if the neurostimulation implant is right for them. Fortunately, patients can experiment with the neurostimulator during a trial period, before it is permanently implanted in the body.

Comprehensive pain management may involve a number of different treatments, including medication, physical therapy, exercise, psychology, complementary medicine and surgery.

The physicians at the all new Pain Management Center at Overlook Hospital are nationally-recognized pain management experts with a background in psychiatry, anesthesiology, radiology, neurology, neurosurgery and orthopedic spine surgery. The Center's specialists diagnose and treat a wide variety of conditions, including post operative pain, neck pain and whiplash injuries, low back pain, discogenic pain, cervical and lumbar radiculopathy, spinal and facet stenosis, chronic tendon and ligament pain, chronic pain and complex regional pain syndromes, neuropathy, fibromyalgia, pain from shingles, myofascial pain, and pain caused by cancer, to name a few.

The Pain Management Center is a multidisciplinary outpatient facility that strives to minimize pain in a minimally invasive manner. The Center's services are designed to enable patients to return to daily functions as soon as possible. A multi-disciplinary team of physicians, nurses and therapists familiar with all aspects of pain management participate in evaluation and treatment planning. The team approach includes participation by the patient and family, as well as the primary care and consulting physicians. For more information, or to make an appointment at The Pain Management Center at Overlook Hospital, call 908-522-6980.

About Overlook Hospital

Part of Atlantic Health, atlanticealth.org, Overlook Hospital is a 504-bed not-for-profit community hospital with more than 1,200 attending physicians. In addition to the state's first designated Comprehensive Stroke Center, the Atlantic Neuroscience Institute offers brain tumor and epilepsy programs, neuro-interventional radiology and the northeast's first CyberKnife for the treatment of inoperable brain, spine and other tumors. Overlook has a new, expanded Emergency Department with specialty areas for pediatrics, geriatrics, chest pain, radiology, and a Fast Track System. The Frank and Mimi Walsh Maternity Center boasts 24 private mother/baby rooms and a new state-of-the-art Level III Community Neonatal Intensive Care Unit with the largest pediatric surgery group in New Jersey.

Overlook Hospital is a research Partner with The Cancer Institute of New Jersey and is accredited by The Joint Commission. Atlantic Health is the primary academic and clinical affiliate in New Jersey of Mount Sinai School of Medicine and The Mount Sinai Hospital.

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