**Supplemental Digital Content 1 - Table 1. Meta-analysis of clinical trials studying treatments of intervertebral disc degeneration and comparison of their efficacy.**

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| **Clinical Trial (Duration)** | **Intervention(a)** | **Index type(b)** | **n** | **Basal(c)** | **+Treat-ment(c)** | **Improve-ment(d)** | **Impr./Basal slope(e)** | **Code(f)** |
| Fritzell *et al.,* 2001 (2 yr)(*7*) | Surgical | VAS | 222 | 64±14 | 43±25 | 21 | 0·33 | F1 |
| Surgical | ODI | 222 | 47±11 | 36±18 | 11 | 0·23 | F2 |
| Non-surgical | VAS | 72 | 63±14 | 58±19 | 5 | 0·08 | F3 |
| Non-surgical | ODI | 72 | 48±12 | 46±16 | 2 | 0·04 | F4 |
| Brox *et al.*, 2003 (1 yr)(*9*) | Fusion | VAS | 32 | 62±14 | 39±26 | 23 | 0·37 | B1 |
| Fusion | ODI | 32 | 42±11 | 26±16 | 16 | 0·38 | B2 |
| CI+Exercise | VAS | 32 | 64±14 | 39±26 | 15 | 0·23 | B3 |
| CI+Exercise | ODI | 32 | 42±13 | 30±20 | 12 | 0·29 | B4 |
| Fairbank *et al.,* 2005 (2 yr)(*10*) | Fusion | ODI | 176 | 47±15 | 34±21 | 13 | 0·28 | Fa2 |
| CI+Exercise | ODI | 173 | 45±14 | 36±20 | 9 | 0·20 | Fa4 |
| Brox *et al.*, 2006 (1 yr)(*8*) | Fusion | ODI | 28 | 47±9 | 38±20 | 9 | 0·19 | B2b |
| CI+Exercise | ODI | 29 | 45±9 | 32+19 | 13 | 0·29 | B4b |
| Hohaus *et al.*, 2008 (2 yr)(*12*) | Sequestrectomy +ADCT | VAS | 12 | 28±9 | 6±9 | 22 | 0·79 | H1 |
| Sequestrectomy +ADCT | ODI | 12 | 56±19 | 12±18 | 44 | 0·79 | H2 |
| Sequestrectomy | VAS | 16 | 27±10 | 8±7 | 19 | 0·70 | H3 |
| Sequestrectomy | ODI | 16 | 54+20 | 15±13 | 39 | 0·72 | H4 |
| Siepe *et al.*, 2009. (4 yr) ProDisc(*13*) | Replacement | VAS | 161 | 70±15 | 32±28 | 38 | 0·54 | S1 |
| Replacement | ODI | 161 | 41±15 | 20±20 | 21 | 0·51 | S2 |
| Guyer *et al.*, 2009 (5 yr) Charite(*11*) | Fusion | VAS | 43 | 71±13 | 31±28 | 40 | 0·56 | G1 |
| Fusion | ODI | 43 | 51±13 | 24±21 | 27 | 0·53 | G2 |
| Replacement | VAS | 90 | 70±14 | 32±28 | 38 | 0·54 | G3 |
| Replacement | ODI | 90 | 48±13 | 24±22 | 24 | 0·50 | G4 |
| This Study, 2010 (1 yr) | MSC | VAS | 10 | 69±10 | 20±21 | 49 | 0·71 | T1 |
| MSC | ODI | 10 | 25±13 | 7±7 | 18 | 0·72 | T2 |

(a)CI, Cognitive intervention; ADCT, Autologous disc cell transplantation; MSC, Mesenchymal stem cells expanded from a bone marrow sample. (b)VAS, Visual analogue scale; ODI, Oswestry disability index; (c)Mean±SD; (d)Difference between “basal” and “treatment” values. (e)Impr./Basal slope, ratio improvement/basal = slope in Figure 1; (f)Code in Figure 1.