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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Spine Team Texas and Harris Methodist Southlake Partner
in Groundbreaking Clinical Trial Study
Treatment Provides Hope for Back Pain Relief*

Southlake, Texas (October 15, 2008) —The pain can be so oppressing tears well in a person's eyes—both from hurting and from the reduced ability to play with children, sit down or pick up something as insignificant as a penny.

An alternative treatment for lumbar back pain caused by degenerative disk in the lumbar spine is being studied by Spine Team Texas in Southlake. Spine Team Texas is one of only 20 spine treatment practices in the nation selected to participate in a study sponsored by Medtronic and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Spine Team Texas surgeons will perform these procedures at Harris Methodist Southlake Center for Diagnostics and Surgery.

The study offers a potential surgical alternative for lumbar back pain sufferers. A silicone device called the DIAM™ Spinal Stabilization System, being studied by Medtronic, is placed between the posterior aspects of two lumbar vertebrae to potentially limit pain. The procedure is performed by making a small incision along the spine, the DIAM™ device is inserted, tethered and the incision is stitched closed. Most patients return home within 24 to 48 hours after surgery.

Three hundred and six patients will be allowed to participate in the study. Through random selection, one-third of patients participating in the study will receive conservative care as the control treatment for the study; the other two-thirds will receive the investigational treatment, which is the DIAM™ implant.

Currently, there are multiple non-surgical options, but only limited surgical choices for degenerative disk disease. Spinal fusion is one of the surgical options. Dr. Juan Bartolomei is a neurosurgeon and the principal investigator of the study at Spine Team Texas. Unlike other traditional procedures currently offered for degenerative disc disease, the implant can be removed without altering the anatomy if the patient does not experience the desired outcome. The nerves remain intact with this procedure; therefore, the procedure is reversible and other options can still be considered. If proven safe and effective in the clinical trial, this may be an exciting potential option for patients, as well as the treating physicians.

Anyone interested in participating in this investigational study should contact Spine Team Texas at 817-442-9300 to talk with a specialist and be evaluated for inclusion in the study.

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