

The Gill Lecture of the Philadelphia Orthopaedic Society New Inventions In Compression Fracture Management: Vertebroplasty and Kyphoplasty

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The Department of Orthopaedic Surgery of the University of Pennsylvania annually sponsors a lecture for the Philadelphia Orthopaedic Society. Named in honor of past Penn Chairman, Dr. A. Bruce Gill, the lectureship always attracts prominent speakers. The 2001 address was no exception as we were honored in December to host Dr. John Heller, spine surgeon, from Emory University.

In addition to the Penn's weekly Grand Rounds schedule, the Gill Lecture allows area orthopaedic surgeons to partake in an educational discussion by a leading expert. This year, Dr. Heller discussed the technique of vertebroplasty and kyphoplasty for the management of compression fractures of the spine.

After a cocktail hour and dinner, Dr. Heller started off by presenting demographical statistics about compression fractures. He then gave historical information about vertebroplasty along with some possible indications. Dr. Heller detailed the technique using multiple pictures and diagrams. He also discussed outcomes and complications. Dr. Heller stressed that vertebroplasty did not reduce the spinal deformity.

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Speaker John G. Heller, M.D., (right) with Richard D. Lackman, M.D., Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, University of Pennsylvania.

Attention was then turned to kyphoplasty. The main differences, Dr. Heller stated, are that kyphoplasty allows an attempt to reduce the fracture and carries a lower risk of cement extravasation. He outlined the technique and discussed the limited data regarding outcomes. Dr. Heller then presented a number of cases in which he depicted the technique and the possible complications.

The evening was concluded with a question and answer session followed by dessert. Overall, the talk was enjoyed by all who attended. We thank Dr. Heller for accepting our invitation and sharing his knowledge with us. We look forward to another successful lecture in 2002.