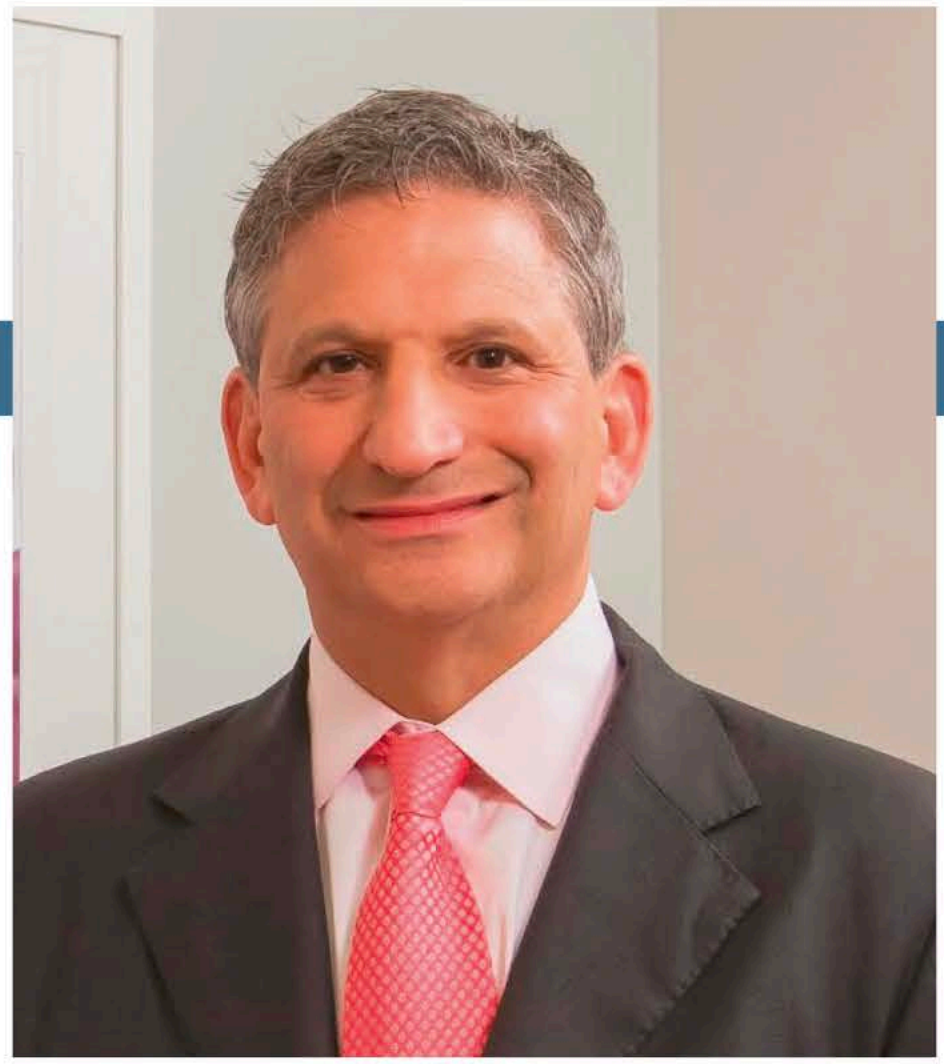
HEALTH CARE HEROES

INNOVATION HERO CATEGORY

# DR. SCOTT SCHLESINGER

## LEGACY SPINE AND NEUROLOGICAL SPECIALISTS



Seeking a way to serve patients in the grips of debilitating spinal pain, Dr. Scott Schlesinger developed a groundbreaking surgical procedure that brings relief and restores a patient's quality of life.

"Health care is always evolving," said Allie Mills, administrator of Legacy Spine and Neurological Specialists in Little Rock, which Schlesinger founded. "Developing ways to improve patient care is one of Dr. Schlesinger's top priorities in his practice. He strongly prefers the 'less is more' approach to minimally invasive care, which has pushed him to develop new ways to care for his patients. In doing this, it has given the practice the opportunity to provide outstanding care to an expanding population of people in need of neurosurgical care."

Schlesinger is credited with developing the Midline Image Guided Fusion Procedure, a technique that allows the entire fusion surgery to be performed through a single "keyhole" incision of only 15 to 20 mm. In comparison, the incision size necessary for a traditional spinal fusion can exceed 75 mm.

"Keyhole access surgery allows for less tissue disruption and may impact important surgical parameters such as surgery time and blood loss," Mills said. "This technique allows single level lumbar fusions in patients with low comorbidities to be performed on an entirely outpatient basis. This makes for lower post-op infection rates, lower cost and quicker recovery time."

Patient studies have shown the procedure to be remarkably effective. Mills said 40 patients suffering from degenerative disc disease who tested positive for radicular pain and segmental instability were treated using the procedure and all 40 were successfully discharged the same day of surgery.

"Hospital stays associated with traditional spinal fusions are, on average, between three and five days," she said. "No blood transfusions were required for any of these cases and the average operating room time was 204 minutes."

Schlesinger grew up in Hot Springs and completed his undergraduate studies in 1982 at the University of Arkansas. He attended medical school at UAMS and completed both his internship and his residency at Parkland Hospital in Dallas. He also completed a fellowship at Centre Hospitalier in Lausanne, Switzerland. He's been ranked a Top 10 Neurological Surgeon Specialist by Vitals and was voted Best Little Rock Surgeon, 2014.

His expertise and innovation has earned him a global reputation with the potential for helping spinal patients worldwide.

"This procedure offers patients the least-invasive surgical solution to their clinical symptoms," Mills said. "The procedure also facilitates the performance of some single level lumbar fusion procedures, in the potentially less expensive outpatient setting, giving patients better choice of how their problems are addressed."

## HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Scott Schlesinger is credited with developing the Midline Image Guided Fusion Procedure, a technique that allows surgery to be performed through a single "keyhole" incision of only 15 to 20 mm. In comparison, the incision size necessary for a traditional spinal fusion can exceed 75 mm. One study involving 40 patients suffering from degenerative disc disease who were treated using the procedure; they were successfully discharged the same day of surgery where under existing methods, a hospital stay of three to five days, is typical.