

# Just one ozone jab to ease your back pain

© Colin Anderson/Blend Images/Corbis

**London:** Ozone is a highly reactive gas which can be beneficial or harmful to human health. But, a single jab of the gas could ease the agony of back pain for millions of people, a new study has claimed.

Scientists at Frankfurt University in Germany found that around two-thirds of patients who had ozone injected said it relieved the pain caused by disc problems.

Ozone could be beneficial or harmful to health, depending where it's in the atmosphere. The 'ozone layer', which extends from six to thirty miles above the Earth's surface, protects us from the Sun's harmful ultraviolet ra-



**QUICK RELIEF**

diation. But at ground-level, it can be a dangerous air pollutant that damages the airways and inflames the lining of the lungs, the Daily Mail reported.

In recent years, however, researchers have been studying its potential as a remedy for herniated discs. This is where discs in the spine which normally act as shock absorbers for the body become damaged and inflamed, pressing against nearby nerves and causing pain and numbness.

Treatments usually involve physiotherapy and painkillers but many people end up needing surgery. But the ozone therapy

could help many avoid surgery, the scientists said. In the latest study, the German team treated 327 patients with bulging discs who had not got better on other treatments and were heading for major surgery. After a single injection, 37% reported they were still pain-free six months later. Another third reported less frequent episodes of pain, usually once a day rather than several times earlier.

Scans showed the discs shrunk by between 2% and 15% afterwards, researchers said. "If you reduce the volume, it won't be pushing against the nerve and causing pain," they added. **PTI**