1. Top view of a vertebra and intervertebral disc, showing the disc’s nucleus (shown in white) bulging outward and pinching a spinal nerve root (blue).

2. Side view of bulging disc pinching a spinal nerve root.

3a. View of METRx™ System dilators sliding down sequentially to vertebra.

3b. View of dilators resting on vertebra. Once dilators have been inserted, a retractor tube is slid into place to maintain the opening, and the dilators are removed.

4. With the retractor tube (green cylinder) in place, the surgeon uses microscopic instruments to remove the portion of the bulging disc pinching the spinal nerve root.

5. An adhesive bandage easily closes the incision site.