

Oh Christmas Tree, oh Christmas Tree!

Lying in the driveway I thought, "...I just broke my back!! I can't believe that me, of all people, the guy who helps patients avoid spinal surgery is now going to need surgery myself". It was Sunday, December 13th and I was bringing home the Christmas tree and taking it off the top of the car. After cutting the rope from the sides of the luggage rack, the tree shifted awkwardly and slid down the SUV landing on the driveway right in front of the path to the front door. Perfect I thought, "I'll bring it straight thru the front door." The tree was 6 or 7 feet tall, but it looked deceptively light. Thinking that I could manage, I began lifting the tree making sure to keep my back straight and my knees bent while I bent straight over and lifted straight up. The trunk of the tree moved, but the branches never left the driveway, which is where my entire body was about to be writhing in pain. I felt a pop and then an immediate burning sensation accompanied by a sharp, stabbing, lightning like pain. "Uh oh, that wasn't good", I fell to the ground. "Was that tree just watered or something?"

My wife and kids came running out. "Get the keys and call Dr. Mike please." Come to think of it, I may have forgotten to say please. In the car, on our way to the office, I was in so much pain that my 4 year old began crying. I attempted to console her telling her "daddy will be ok", while trying not to cry myself. Was I going to be ok? I quietly began thinking about how I would not be able to go to the gym or go on vacation with the kids. I began thinking about work, my career, disability... this was bad.

I couldn't stand up straight. Rising from a seated position and sitting from a standing position caused stabbing pain in my back and shooting pain in my left leg. I had numbness and tingling in my left foot. Walking up stairs was slow and painful. The act of sitting on a toilet was painful enough, but taking care of business was worse. I now felt the pain that is usually only described to me by patients.

Suddenly, I understood the feeling of being incapacitated and felt increased sympathy for my patients.

I was scared.

Dr. Mike met me in the office and applied ice to help reduce spasm and inflammation. I could see in his face, that he too was concerned for me. He adjusted

my spine gently and then put me on the spinal decompression table. I was still in a bad way, but felt slightly better. He sent me home to rest, and warned me to take it easy. He didn't need to worry, I couldn't move a muscle!

WHAT HAPPENED

When I lifted the tree, I "threw my back out". More specifically, a bone in my lower back rotated out of place which put pressure on the nerve that exits at that level. The result was a shooting, lightening-like pain down my left leg. Nerves are either choked by a bulging or a herniated disc,

"I PUT OUR PRACTICE MODEL TO THE TEST. MEDICAL DOCTORS, PHYSICAL THERAPISTS, AND CHIROPRACTORS ALL WORKED TOGETHER TO GET ME BETTER. I WOULD LOVE TO THINK THAT I GOT SPECIAL TREATMENT, BUT EVERYONE IN OUR OFFICE GETS THE SAME TENDER LOVING CARE THAT I RECEIVED. IT MADE ME PROUD OF AND THANKFUL FOR MY COLLEAGUES BUT MOST OF ALL, IT MADE ME BETTER!"

a rotated vertebra, or both. In my case, it was both! I already have a bulging disc at L5/S1, and now after lifting the tree, I rotated a bone out of place too.

MEDICAL INTRAVENTION

The following day was Monday. Severe muscle spasm was still present, which was preventing Dr. Mike from getting to the spine below and returning the vertebra to its rightful position. Muscle spasm is like putting up scaffolding to work on a building. You put it up, do your work, and then take it down. Muscles swell up to provide protection while we heal below. So there I was, one big muscle spasm. I needed help reducing it. Enter Dr. LaCap, Medical Director at Garden State Spine & Pain Institute. After examining me, Dr. LaCap gave me options. A prescription for an anti-inflammatory which will help reduce spasm over time, or a focused trigger point injection directly in the injured

area which may reduce inflammation immediately.

The choice was easy... I wanted to be able to return to life as I knew it. I wanted to be able to run, play, and lift the kids. I wanted to workout... I was stressed out and gaining weight. It didn't hurt at all and started to work immediately! The spasm was dissipating. I could feel it lessening. It was now time for the tug of war.

CHIROPRACTIC

When patients are in acute pain which usually follows trauma, it is often necessary to treat them a couple times a day. I

was getting adjusted 3x's a day.

Following each adjustment, I felt almost perfect. However, muscles adapt quickly, so when a bone gets knocked out of place, the muscles quickly become comfortable holding it out of place. Now that Dr. Mike was able to get below the muscle spasm and realign the joint, the muscles were working against him trying to pull the bone out of place again and again. It is a tug of war that requires frequent adjustments to guide and retrain the muscles back to where they should be. The muscles would pull the bone out of place, and Dr. Mike would put it back. The muscles

would then pull it out again. This was a revolving cycle for about 3 days until the muscle started to realize that Dr. Mike was the BOSS!!

PHYSICAL THERAPY

My treatment also consisted of decompression therapy on the Triton DTS Spinal Decompression Table. This is a procedure of critical importance for the treatment of disc disorders, and is supervised by our Director of Physical Therapy. The constant traction helped to relieve pressure on the compressed disc allowing it to "puff" up slightly removing the pressure on the adjacent nerve. No pinched nerve... no pain.

FIXED IN 5 DAYS!!

I have never been so proud to be a part of Garden State Spine & Pain Institute as I was the day I realized that I was in the right place, being treated by the right

doctors, and was on my way to getting better. I was now a patient in my own office and was amazed at how the team of doctors at Garden State Spine & Pain Institute, all with different specialties, swooped in and took control of the situation. They all worked together coordinating care to get me out of pain quickly. 5 Days and I was 85% better. I was able to sit and stand with less pain able to wash, dress and cloth myself, and go on vacation with the kids. Going to the bathroom was also no longer a major chore.

I put our practice model to the test. Medical Doctors, Physical Therapists, and Chiropractors all worked together to get me better. I would love to think that I got special treatment, but everyone in our office gets the same tender loving care that I received. It made me proud of and thankful for my colleagues but most of all, it made me better! ■

– Dr. Raj Gupta



*We ARE the Doctors
You've been Aching for!*

**GARDEN STATE SPINE & PAIN
INSTITUTE, LLC**
1806 RT 35 South
Oakhurst, NJ 07755
732-660-1113
www.gardenstatespine.com

*Got questions? Just want to say Hi?...
email me! Drraj@gardenstatespine.com*