



INOVA FAIR OAKS HOSPITAL

INhealth

**A CUSTOM-FIT APPROACH
TO BACK PAIN**

Naturally!

Inova helps
to find a
treatment
right for you

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Deborah Ondek visited the Inova Spine Program for chronic back pain that would not subside. The solutions? An adjustment to her workstation and daily exercises.

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STAYING

Inova offers custom-fit approach to back pain

When it comes to back pain, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to treatment. That's why the Inova Spine Program at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital has developed a unique, patient-centered program that tailors treatment to each patient's needs.

"We customize the treatment plan," says Ali Ganjei, MD, Co-Medical Director of the Inova Spine Program. "First, we identify each and every pain-generating structure, then we design a logical and evidence-based treatment plan that aims to reverse the root cause."

When a patient visits the Inova Spine Program, a dedicated intake coordinator takes a detailed spine history and gathers recent test results to assess physical condition and pain level. After a comprehensive evaluation, the patient is referred to the appropriate specialist for treatment.

"Every patient's experience is different, so we really focus on personalizing our care," says Spine Care Navigator Kelly Walsh, RN, MSN, CNL.



Ali Ganjei, MD

CONSERVATIVE PATH

Fewer than 15 percent of patients who seek care at the Inova Spine Program require surgery; most can be treated conservatively with solutions including pain management and physical therapy.

Relief with Surgery

While most people recover from back pain with the help of conservative methods such as physical therapy, some find relief through surgical solutions. When a person is in severe pain, has back instability, or has nerve issues such as bladder control or loss of motor function, he or she may benefit from surgery, says Ali Ganjei, MD, Co-Medical Director of the Inova Spine Program. To determine whether surgery is right for you, your physician will assess the severity of your condition, whether

you have pressure on the spinal cord or nerve root, how long you have been in pain and your medical history.

The Inova Spine Program at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital provides the latest minimally invasive surgical procedures to treat a wide array of back problems including herniated discs and compression fractures. These procedures are performed through tiny incisions, resulting in less pain, a quicker recovery and a speedier return to normal activities.



In his spare time, computer software salesman Michael Fox plays trumpet and is a member of The Polished Brass Quintet. He underwent surgery for a pinched nerve in his back and vertebral body slippage.

IN TUNE

Deborah Ondek is one of those individuals. A little more than a year ago, Ms. Ondek experienced lower back pain that wouldn't subside. Her sleep was constantly interrupted and she had to miss work at her job at a telecommunications company.

"I was convinced that because of the chronic pain and its severity, I would need surgery," recalls Ms. Ondek.

Ms. Ondek was referred to Dr. Ganjei at the Inova Spine Program. Dr. Ganjei recommended ergonomic correction at work that involved modifying her workstation, as well as performing daily therapeutic exercises. Within two weeks, Ms. Ondek noticed a marked improvement in her back pain and the ability to sleep through the night. Two months later, her pain was gone entirely.

"The lifestyle changes Dr. Ganjei recommended became part of my daily routine," says Ms. Ondek, who now hikes, exercises regularly and has recently started martial arts. "I went from not being able to sleep throughout the night and living with chronic pain to being able to do any activity pain-free."

CHOOSING SURGERY

For some, a surgical approach is the only treatment that can vanquish chronic back pain. When computer software salesman Michael Fox tried less invasive options, such as physiotherapy, acupuncture and nerve blocks, nothing eased the ache he endured around the clock.

"I had very strong, constant radiating pain down my right leg," recalls Mr. Fox, who plays trumpet in a professional group in his spare time. "I couldn't sit or stand comfortably and my sleep was disrupted."



Christopher Silveri, MD

After consulting with his primary care physician and an orthopedic surgeon, Mr. Fox turned to the Inova Spine Program for help. He consulted with Christopher Silveri, MD, spine surgeon and Medical Director of the Inova Spine Program at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital. Dr. Silveri recommended that Fox try conservative therapy first. Mr. Fox then spent six weeks under the guidance of Dr. Ganjei, completing core strengthening and stretching exercises. He also took pain and anti-inflammatory medications. But when Dr. Ganjei saw little improvement, he recommended surgery.

"Mr. Fox had a pinched nerve in the right lower lumbar region that was not responding to conservative care, and he also had slippage of one vertebral body over the other," says Dr. Ganjei. "Therefore surgery was his only reliable option."

Dr. Silveri performed a procedure known as multilevel decompression and fusion. The results exceeded Mr. Fox's expectations, allowing him to resume his work-related travels with little to no pain.

Lending Support

At the Inova Spine Program, a spine care navigator is there every step of the way to help simplify your wellness journey.

"As navigators, we have extensive experience working with spine

patients. We serve as a resource for education, as a liaison between a patient and his or her providers, and as an advocate," says spine care navigator Kelly Walsh, RN, MSN, CNL. Whether your treatment involves conservative therapy or surgical care, Walsh is there to explain

each modality, review medication protocols, help coordinate appointments and review plans of care.

"I enjoy helping to improve patients' outcomes by being a resource and an advocate during their journey to better spine health," says Walsh.

"The surgery was very beneficial," Mr. Fox says. "I expect that after starting physical therapy I'll get back to 90 to 100 percent of unimpaired capacity without medication. It is this coordinated and patient-centered approach the two doctors took that gave me great confidence I was in the right hands."

BACK PAIN SOLUTIONS

Learn more about back and neck pain treatment options by calling the Inova Spine Program at **703.391.3667**.



Convinced she needed surgery, Deborah Ondek received relief from lower back pain with a workstation adjustment and daily exercises. She uses an ergonomic chair, like the one shown here.