

Hiking and walking in the Sierra Mountains after spine surgery

Diane began experiencing back pain symptoms early in 2007. While the pain was tolerable at first, she soon realized that her pain was worsening, not getting better.

She made an appointment with her physician and he prescribed conservative treatments such as physical therapy and anti-inflammatories to help relieve her symptoms. While physical therapy did give Diane some temporary relief of her symptoms, the pain would return and was becoming more unbearable. Diane was not able to stand up straight and walking was very difficult. She was unable to complete every day activities like cooking and cleaning. Diane also noticed reduced stamina and spent much of her time indoors writing in her journal. Because of her back pain, she was living a sedentary life and was no longer able to enjoy some of her favorite activities, such as walking along the beach or going to the opera.

Diane knew she wanted to get back to her normal lifestyle, so she made an appointment at Monterey Spine, a multidisciplinary, regional center of excellence that combines nonsurgical care, along with a board-certified neurosurgeon, Dr. Dragan Dimitrov, and a fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Sohrab Gollogly, who has expertise in scoliosis treatment. During her appointment, the surgeons reviewed Diane's medical history and diagnostic tests, including MRI. Dr. Dimitrov and Dr. Gollogly explained to Diane the complex conditions that were causing her pain and the treatments that would be necessary to relieve her symptoms. She had degenerative discs in her lumbar spine from L2-L5; she had also developed scoliosis. The surgeons explained to Diane that she would need a laminectomy with spinal fusion to correct her spine problems. She understood that both procedures were complex and decided to get a second



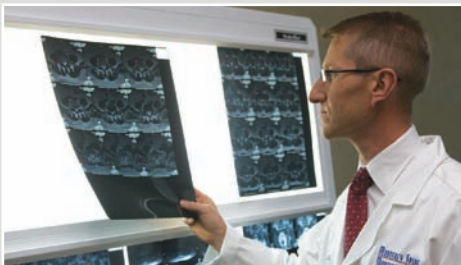
opinion at UCSF. After getting the second opinion, Diane decided to have her surgery performed locally by Dr. Dimitrov and Dr. Gollogly. The surgeons worked together to formulate a surgical plan using a minimally invasive anterior approach. "I realized that by having my surgeries locally at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, all of the latest technology would be used, and I would receive the added benefit of more personal care by Dr. Dimitrov and Dr. Gollogly," Diane remembers.

Her surgery was performed in November of 2009 and Diane soon noticed improved symptoms. Dr. Dimitrov made daily rounds to monitor her progress during her hospital stay. And while recovery for Diane was not easy, her pain was almost completely improved within two weeks. Soon, she was once again walking along the beach near her home in the Sierra Mountains. She was also able to go to the opera and symphony; something Diane had not enjoyed for years.

She entered the physical therapy gym at Monterey Spine for about eight weeks after her surgery where she learned stretching exercises that would help strengthen her core and make her spine more flexible

and resistant to injury. "The different specialties and teamwork at Monterey Spine are a good combination. Dr. Dimitrov & Dr. Gollogly performed my surgery and then I was able to enter the physical therapy gym, where the therapists talk directly with the doctors," Diane says.

Today, she still incorporates into her daily routine the strengthening and floor exercises she learned in physical therapy. When asked what activities she can do now that she was unable to do before her surgery, Diane answered, "I can stand up straight, this is something that most people take for granted and I never will again." She is also back to taking short hikes in the Sierra Mountains.



About Dragan Dimitrov, MD

Dr. Dragan Dimitrov is a board-certified neurosurgeon; he received his undergraduate degree at Duke University where he was on the dean's list and graduated cum laude. He received his medical degree from New York University School of Medicine and completed a residency in neurosurgery at Duke University in North Carolina. Dr. Dimitrov has been honored with awards from the American Association of Neurological Surgeons related to research in the field of neurosurgery. He is on staff at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula and Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital.



About Sohrab Gollogly, MD

Dr. Gollogly is a board-certified, fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon. He completed a fellowship in pediatric spine surgery at San Diego Children's Hospital after a fellowship in spine surgery at Centre Des Massues in Lyon, France. Dr. Gollogly earned his medical degree from the University of Washington School of Medicine and proceeded to do an internship and residency in orthopedic surgery at the University of Utah. He has appointments at the Community Hospital of Monterey Peninsula. Dr. Gollogly continues to perform scientific research and participate in several volunteer international surgical organizations.



About Monterey Spine

Monterey Spine is a multidisciplinary, regional center of excellence for the treatment of back and neck problems. Monterey Spine acts as a regional spine center serving the Monterey Bay region, including the counties of Monterey, San Benito, Fresno, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara. The spine center includes the expertise of Dr. Sohrab Gollogly, Dr. Dragan Dimitrov, Dr. Gary Chang, and Dr. Laurie Kleinman. This team of specialists are able to care for any type of back or neck problem, from simple back or neck strain all the way to complex spine surgery