



The Spinal Column

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May 2009

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What's New at LSI

Patient Care Goes Full-Circle at LSI

The Laser Spine Institute Patient Services Department plays

a key role in all aspects of patient recovery and outcome, helping each patient optimize improvement in their quality of life.

» [Click here for more information.](#)

» [LSi Frequently Asked Questions](#)



Patient Spotlight

Rimoun Goris: Free to Live

Struggling with the results of a failed open back surgery, Rimoun Goris turned to LSI for help. Three years after his LSI procedure in his lower back, he has returned to a normal and active life.

» [Full story...](#)

» [Find LSI Patient Testimonials From Your Area](#)



Wellness 101

Ask the Doctor

Q: I was recently diagnosed with a herniated disc. A friend suggested I visit a chiropractor to move my spine around. Could this cause further injury?

» [The Answer](#)

» [Herniated Disc and Other Spine Conditions](#)



Back Pain Wasn't On The Travel Checklist!

You have been planning your vacation for months - why would you ever consider canceling your getaway because of your back pain?

Here is a helpful guide to prepare for your upcoming adventure without letting your pain ruin your plans.

» [More info...](#)

» [Helpful Resources from LSI](#)



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Patient Care Goes Full-Circle at LSI

Laser Spine Institute is dedicated to providing complete care that encompasses each patient's overall LSI experience, which begins at a seminar or by speaking with a Patient Advocate and extends through the Five Day Process, leading into a successful recovery period.



Post-operatively, LSI has a fully-staffed Physical Therapy and Functional Rehabilitation department that takes each patient through two light physical therapy sessions, in addition to creating a functional rehabilitation program, which is catered to each individual's pathology, LSI procedure and expectations for recovery. In the Diagnostic Center, a physiatrist is on-staff to administer post-operative injections, if necessary. Once the patient is discharged from LSI and returns home, the Patient Services Department continues to keep the lines of communication open between the facility and the patient.

Committed to effective communication and continuous patient support, the Patient Services Department strives to provide superior post-operative care. In doing so, the Patient Services Department plays a key role in all aspects of patient recovery and outcome, helping each patient optimize improvement in their quality of life. As Director of Patient Services Justin Horne states, "The Patient Services Department's mission is to preserve the integrity of LSI through its devotion to patient outcomes, customer service, post operative recovery, and overall communication and support."

Once the patients return home, Patient Services Specialists conduct follow-up calls to assess patients' recovery



status, provide follow-up recommendations, and provide further assistance. Through continued patient interaction, the department also assists LSI in furthering research and development initiatives. Through this research, the department has reported an 85% improvement of quality of life according to patient reports with

success stories being sent to LSI every day.

The established follow-up process consists of a phone call at two, four and six weeks post-operatively. A survey is mailed to the patient 12 weeks after their procedure. However, the Patient Services Department gladly accepts inquiries from patients throughout each business day.

[LSi Frequently Asked Questions](#)



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Rimoun Goris: Free to Live

Before Rimoun Goris had surgery at LSI, he lived with excruciating lower back pain, which radiated down his arms and legs. These symptoms were a result of a herniated disc and scar tissue buildup from a failed open back surgery. The severe pain affected Rimoun's ability to perform the most basic functions like sleeping, walking or sitting. The discomfort had both a physical and emotional impact, decreasing his tolerance level and patience. "If the wind blew against my face the wrong way, I was upset," Rimoun remarked.



Three years ago, Chief Spine Surgeon Dr. James St. Louis was able to decompress the disc releasing the nerve that was being impinged from excessive scar tissue build-up. Overall, the LSI experience for Rimoun was fascinating! He was impressed with the courtesy and support of the entire LSI team. His recovery time was short, which he thoroughly appreciated, having previously experienced the long and grueling recuperation process after an open back surgery.

Since his LSI surgery in 2006, Rimoun has regained his zest for life! He compares his experience to regaining sight after not being able to see. Free from pain, Rimoun was able to return to normal activities as well as the game he loves - soccer, as a coach, player and referee.

[Find LSI Patient Testimonials From Your Area](#)



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Ask the Doctor

Q: I was recently diagnosed with a herniated disc. A friend suggested I visit a chiropractor to move my spine around. Could this cause further injury?

A: Spinal adjustment or manipulation is one form of therapy chiropractors use to treat restricted spinal mobility. The goal is to restore spinal movement and, as a result, improve function and decrease pain. Some types of spinal manipulation can relieve symptoms related to a herniated disc. However, the practice remains controversial and many medical doctors don't recommend chiropractic care to treat a herniated disc.



When there is any type of manipulation in an area with an abnormality, such as a herniated or bulging disc spine condition, the potential for further development of the abnormality exists. If further herniation occurs after manipulation, pressure on the nerves or spinal cord could increase and nerve damage may ultimately occur.

LSI recommends that people who suffer from back or neck pain try conservative treatment such as manipulation or physical therapy, before opting for a surgical procedure. It is important to consult with your physician prior to beginning any type of conservative treatment or regimen. The decision to continue with conservative treatment or have surgery principally depends on the patient's level of pain and dysfunction. Patients who can still function relatively well should continue with conservative care. People with severe pain that results in significant dysfunction may want to consider surgical decompression of the nerve root.

Over time, surgery is considered for about 10% of people who have a herniated disc. Most doctors will wait to suggest a surgical procedure after nonsurgical treatment is conducted for approximately one to three months and usually prior to six months of reported pain without improvement. People who have had a herniated disc and suffer from constant pain, weakness, or numbness for longer than six months may have permanent injury, such as nerve damage, and may benefit less from surgery. The decision is best determined after a consultation with your physician or surgeon.

Surgery to treat a herniated disc is done to reduce pain and allow for more normal movement and function. It is considered, if the following conditions are present:

- 1) If you have a history of persistent leg pain that has not improved with at least 4 weeks of non-surgical treatment, as well as, weakness and limitation of daily activities. Also, if physical examination results find weakness, loss of motion, abnormal sensitivity, or positive straight-leg lift test.
- 2) If diagnostic testing, such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed tomography, or myelogram, indicates that your herniated disc can be treated surgically. Only those herniated disc that are causing symptoms clinically and have failed conservative treatment should be considered for surgical amendment.

Laser Spine Institute (LSI) has a minimally invasive, outpatient, laser assisted technique that can relieve the symptoms of a herniated disc called a Percutaneous Endoscopic Discectomy. This laser spine procedure will remove the portion of the extruding or herniated disc that is now pressing against a nerve causing the symptoms. By removing or shrinking the herniated disc with the laser, the surgeon can decompress the spinal cord or nerve root that is being impinged. At this point, excess disc material is removed and the symptoms of a herniated disc generally disappear.

[Herniated Disc and Other Spine Conditions](#)



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Back Pain Wasn't On The Travel Checklist!

You have planned your vacation for months and really need the break. If you suffer from back or neck pain, pinched nerves or numbness, you need more rest and relaxation than the average person. You can't skip your travel plans and let your back or neck pain win. LSI would like to provide some helpful tips to ensure an enjoyable getaway.



Consult your physician to confirm that you can travel and fill your prescriptions. Be sure to include your medication in your carry-on bag clearly labeled. Check with the airline for the latest regulations on carrying medication or any medical equipment such as an e-stem machine.

There are many helpful travel products on the market that you may want to consider such as a travel pillow to support your back or neck. Another helpful aid for the flight or long car ride might be an ice or heat pack.

If you plan to fly to your destination, consider booking a business class seat or try to book an aisle seat to allow you to get up and walk or stretch in the aisle. An aisle seat also gives you a bit more room to stretch your legs.

Pack lightly especially with your carry-on luggage. When traveling with checked luggage, try to use baggage with wheels to avoid carrying on your shoulders. Lighter luggage will cause less strain on your muscles and joints.

If you are traveling for a long period of time, you may want to research travel insurance and have your physician information handy.

Once you reach your destination, take time to relax and stretch. This is your time to rest and rejuvenate. You may want to keep this in mind while planning activities on vacation to allow for down time. Keep scheduled activities to a minimum, such as one or two per day.

Traveling changes sleep patterns in terms of mattresses, possible time changes and schedules. Add support to an aching back by putting pillows under your knees or between your knees while sleeping.

Keep in mind that a vacation is a time to escape and taking these helpful hints into consideration before you leave will ensure a wonderful vacation for you and your loved ones.

[Helpful Resources from LSI](#)