

LSI



LASER SPINE INSTITUTE

Get your life back



## The Spinal Column

### What's Inside

Volume 2 | Issue 7  
July 2009

<b>WHAT'S NEW AT LSI</b>
» A Proven Leader Joins LSI » Ask The Expert
<b>PATIENT SPOTLIGHT</b>
» A Pink Angel
<b>WELLNESS 101</b>
» Ask The Doctor » Give Your Diet a Boost

### CONTACT US

**Toll Free:**  
**888-220-6056**

TAMPA  
SCOTTSDALE  
SAN DIEGO  
[www.laserspineinstitute.com](http://www.laserspineinstitute.com)

Printable PDF

### TELL A FRIEND

#### Subscribe

Interested in receiving this newsletter?  
Subscribe here!

First Name:

Last Name:

Email address:

I'd like to receive:

HTML  Text

### What's New at LSI

#### A Proven Leader Joins LSI

A veteran of health science research, hospital administration and ambulatory surgical center management joins LSI as Vice President and Executive Director of LSI



Tampa with over 30 years of experience.

» [More info...](#)

» [Become an LSI fan on Facebook](#)

## Ask The Expert

This month's topic is the LSI Tampa Diagnostic Center Procedures with Director of Spinal Diagnostics and Therapeutics, Dr. Robert Gruber.

If you have a question relating to LSI surgical centers, staff, services and other related topics, please share them with us.

» [Read the Q & A](#)

» [Attend an LSI Seminar to Determine Your Candidacy](#)

## Patient Spotlight

### A Pink Angel

Excruciating back pain. An eight year battle with breast cancer. The loss of a child. Most people couldn't endure one of these tragedies, let alone all three; but Bonnie Tanous is not only a survivor. She is an inspiration.

» [Full story...](#)

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



## Wellness 101

### Ask The Doctor

**Q:** Does a family history of osteoporosis increase my chances of developing spinal complications?

» [The Answer](#)

» [Other Spine Conditions](#)



### Give Your Diet a Boost

Chronic pain can lead to improper food choices. However, leading a healthy lifestyle of diet and exercise can combat painful symptoms caused by neck and back pain.

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

» [LSI Resource Center](#)



© Laser Spine Institute, LLC 2009 • A Product of [Horizon Marketing](#) • Powered by [Peer360°](#)

LSI



LASER SPINE INSTITUTE

*Get your life back*



The Spinal Column

## CONTACT US

**Toll Free:**  
**888-220-6056**

TAMPA  
SCOTTSDALE  
SAN DIEGO  
[www.laserspineinstitute.com](http://www.laserspineinstitute.com)

### Table Of Contents

- A Proven Leader Joins LSI
- Ask The Expert
- A Pink Angel
- Ask The Doctor
- Give Your Diet a Boost

### Front Page

#### Subscribe

Interested in receiving this newsletter? [Subscribe here!](#)

First Name:

Last Name:

Email address:

I'd like to receive:

HTML  Text

Volume 2 | Issue 7  
July 2009

### Tell A Friend

Your Name:

Your email address:

Your friend's email address:

Optional message for your friend:

LSI

LASER SPINE INSTITUTE

*Get your life back*

The Spinal Column

CONTACT  
USToll Free:  
888-220-6056TAMPA  
SCOTTSDALE  
SAN DIEGO  
[www.laserspineinstitute.com](http://www.laserspineinstitute.com)**Table Of Contents**

- A Proven Leader Joins LSI
- Ask The Expert
- A Pink Angel
- Ask The Doctor
- Give Your Diet a Boost

**Front Page****Subscribe**Interested in receiving this  
newsletter? [Subscribe here!](#)

First Name:

Last Name:

Email address:

I'd like to receive:

HTML   Text

Volume 2 | Issue 7  
July 2009**A Proven Leader Joins LSI**

A veteran with over 30 years experience in health science research, hospital administration and ambulatory surgical center (ASC) management, Dean Vanderhoof joins Laser Spine Institute to serve as Vice President and Executive Director for LSI Tampa and lead our Florida ASC operations.

A patient services focused leader, Dean has directed surgical, clinical and support services organizations within large (500 – 700 bed), growing hospital systems, as well as led regional operations for the largest private ASC operator in the United States. In addition to his management experience, Dean is a Fellow with the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE) and a speaker who has lectured for a variety of major healthcare organizations, including AORN, and holds a Masters degree in Health and Hospital Administration.

Dean's goal as Vice President of LSI Tampa Operations is to enhance medical outcomes, patient satisfaction, and facility growth. Dean's background, experience and service-oriented leadership style will be a great benefit for our Tampa patients. Furthermore, Dean explains, "I have worked my entire career to create a healthcare setting that effectively combines medical and clinical excellence in an environment where you can put the patient first . . . not just talk about it. In the past few months, I have found LSI to not only be supportive of that notion, but we exemplify this level of quality and service on a daily basis. It is truly energizing to be a part of an organization like this."



[Become an LSI fan on Facebook](#)

© Laser Spine Institute, LLC 2009 • A Product of [Horizon Marketing](#) • Powered by [Peer360°](#)

LSI



LASER SPINE INSTITUTE

Get your life back



The Spinal Column

CONTACT US

Toll Free:  
888-220-6056

TAMPA  
SCOTTSDALE  
SAN DIEGO  
[www.laserspineinstitute.com](http://www.laserspineinstitute.com)

Table Of Contents

- A Proven Leader Joins LSI
- Ask The Expert
- A Pink Angel
- Ask The Doctor
- Give Your Diet a Boost

Front Page

Subscribe

Interested in receiving this newsletter? [Subscribe here!](#)

First Name:

Last Name:

Email address:

I'd like to receive:

HTML    Text

Volume 2 | Issue 7  
July 2009

Ask The Expert

**Q:** I heard that LSI Tampa has a Diagnostic Center. What services are available?

**A:** Located on the first floor of LSI Tampa, the Diagnostic Testing and Pain Management Center is directed by Dr. Robert Gruber along with Dr. Monica Vargas. The center consists of two fluoroscopy equipped procedure rooms, four recovery and pre-operative areas, and two examination rooms, dedicated solely to diagnostic procedures and imaging for LSI patients. Dr. Gruber applies his unique blend of experience and skills, using the most innovative approach to treating spinal conditions. Having worked in the conventional arena of spine care for many years, he is experienced in the diagnosis and management of many different conditions and communicates the benefits and drawbacks of available treatment options.



Many procedures are performed in the diagnostic center by either Dr. Gruber or Dr. Vargas, which may include Selective Nerve Root Block, Diagnostic Facet Injections, Epidural Steroid Injections and Discography. Selective Nerve Root Blocks, Discography, and Diagnostic Facet Injections are performed pre-operatively to most accurately identify the primary source of spinal pain. Post-operatively, the Epidural Steroid Injections can be given for pain control purposes.

Additionally, we have highly trained imaging center professionals who use new digital x-ray Radiographic Imix Orthorad hardware and software, a new GE GoldSeal LX

Fixed 1.5T MRI machine, and new PACS digital imaging display technology which allows the team to send and receive images throughout the Tampa facility and across the country. This advanced equipment improves each patient's experience and provides clear and concise pictures for easier diagnosis and quicker retrieval of these images.

Dr. Gruber further describes, "There is a difference between treating the patient, and treating the x-ray or MRI. While the physicians' examination and review of imaging results allow us to plan most surgeries, at times, imaging studies show so much pathology that the skill required becomes determining what area(s) is/are the true source of pain. Skill and experience of the treating physician combined with selective diagnostic injections typically allows us to narrow down a primary source of pain and treat it using a minimally invasive approach."

**[Attend an LSI Seminar to Determine Your Candidacy](#)**

LSI



LASER SPINE INSTITUTE

*Get your life back*

The Spinal Column

CONTACT  
USToll Free:  
888-220-6056TAMPA  
SCOTTSDALE  
SAN DIEGO  
[www.laserspineinstitute.com](http://www.laserspineinstitute.com)

## Table Of Contents

- A Proven Leader Joins LSI
- Ask The Expert
- A Pink Angel
- Ask The Doctor
- Give Your Diet a Boost

## Front Page

## Subscribe

Interested in receiving this newsletter? [Subscribe here!](#)

First Name:

Last Name:

Email address:

I'd like to receive:

HTML    Text

Volume 2 | Issue 7  
July 2009

## A Pink Angel

To understand what Bonnie Tanous has been through over the last nine years is to start from the beginning. First and foremost, Bonnie is a breast cancer survivor. She was first diagnosed in 1993. Then, in January 2000, she was told she only had 12 months to live. After 8 years of cancer and over 50 surgeries, she beat it, but that would only be the start of what was to come.



While battling her own form of cancer, Bonnie was presented with another challenging medical situation; her daughter Abigail's diagnosis of neuroblastoma, a childhood cancer affecting approximately 650 children per year under the age 5. Little Abigail fought for 14 months; three days before Abigail earned her wings, Bonnie promised her she would let the world know she existed and would pay her life forward to help others with cancer. Unfortunately, while twisting over Abigail's Hospice bed, Bonnie felt a "snap" in her back. She herniated a disc and couldn't move. At that moment, as any parent would do, she ignored her pain and focused on her daughter. It would be 3 years almost to the day that Bonnie would find relief from her excruciating back pain.

"I fought cancer for eight years and dealt with back pain for 3 years. The back pain was actually worse. The pain never let me go, 24/7. I didn't know how I was going to get through life; the pain was that bad." Bonnie was recommended surgery; an invasive laminectomy. Six weeks after surgery the pain had come back. She worked through physical therapy and epidural steroid injections for four months, then the disc re-herniated, causing the pain to worsen. The doctor then performed a second laminectomy,

but the pain continued to worsen. Doctors told her there was nothing wrong – they wanted her to get deep tissue massages and to see a chiropractor, but the pain was worse than ever. Nothing relieved the pain, which was a constant reminder of her daughter's fight with cancer.

Bonnie had then become aware of two patients who benefited from surgery at LSI. After about a year, she finally took the leap and booked surgery. "I had my initial evaluation, and the physician told me the reality was that LSI could bring my pain level down to a 2 [which normally was an 8 or 9 on a daily basis.] The honesty of Dr. Wheelhouse, Dr. Gruber and my gut told me that I was in the right place."

Since her endoscopic surgery at LSI in May 2009, Bonnie has been able to continue her participation in the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Over the past 3 years, Bonnie has been fundraising and walking for the 3-day, 60-mile, breast cancer walk. This excitement to race for the cure all started with the promise that she had made to Abbigail. "She came into the world with love and went out of the world with love; I am driven with passion to help others after her death." Nothing would stop her from racing to raise money for cancer; not even her back pain. "Abbigail is woven into the tapestry of my life." For Bonnie Tanous, walking had become her life. "Telling me I can't walk is like taking a bicycle away from Lance Armstrong!" Bonnie exclaimed in an interview.

Eight weeks after surgery, Bonnie is doing great. She is gearing up for the 3-Day Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Walk in Denver, Colorado this upcoming August. The important part of her participation in the race is fundraising. Bonnie has already earned over \$25,000 for breast cancer research over the past 3 years. If you would like to support Bonnie in earning her goal of \$ 15,000 this year, please click on the link below. Please help carry on the memory of Abbigail by donating today. "Thank you in advance for your support and your donation. You too can make a difference in this war against cancer," Tanous said.

Bonnie's words of wisdom: "Everyone has problems in life; it's how you deal with them that count. I am thankful for all that I have in life. Everything happens for a reason. I hope to inspire you to live your best life and focus on the positive!"

To make an online donation, please click on the following link: [http://www.the3day.org/site/TR?px=1295268&fr\\_id=1310&pg=personal](http://www.the3day.org/site/TR?px=1295268&fr_id=1310&pg=personal)

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

LSI



LASER SPINE INSTITUTE

*Get your life back*

## The Spinal Column

### CONTACT US

Toll Free:  
888-220-6056

TAMPA  
SCOTTSDALE  
SAN DIEGO  
[www.laserspineinstitute.com](http://www.laserspineinstitute.com)

#### Table Of Contents

- A Proven Leader Joins LSI
- Ask The Expert
- A Pink Angel
- Ask The Doctor
- Give Your Diet a Boost

#### Front Page

#### Subscribe

Interested in receiving this newsletter? [Subscribe here!](#)

First Name:

Last Name:

Email address:

I'd like to receive:

HTML  Text

Volume 2 | Issue 7  
July 2009

### Ask The Doctor

**Q:** Does a family history of osteoporosis increase my chances of developing spinal complications?

**A:** It may. Let's start off by defining the term "osteoporosis". "Osteoporosis" literally means "porous bones." This condition occurs when bones begin to lose some of their essential elements, the most important of which is calcium. Over time, bone mass decreases. As a result, bones lose their strength, become fragile, and break easily. In extreme cases, even a sneeze or a sudden movement may be enough to break a bone.



Osteoporosis is a serious health problem, affecting approximately 28 million people in the United States and is responsible for about 1.5 million fractures (broken bones) each year. The most common locations where breaks occur are the hip, spine, and wrist. Hip and spine injuries are the most serious, often requiring hospitalization and major surgery. They may also lead to other serious consequences, including permanent disability and death.

#### Contributing Factors

While a decrease in bone mass is a normal part of aging, there are certain factors that increase a person's risk for osteoporosis. These factors include:

- Gender- Women are more likely to have osteoporosis than men. Women commonly lose 30 to 50% of their bone mass over their lifetimes, while men lose about 20 to 35%.
- Race- Caucasian and Asian women are at somewhat higher

risk for osteoporosis than are African American and Hispanic women.

- Body structure- Individuals with smaller, thinner bones are at higher risk for osteoporosis.
- Early menopause- Women who experience menopause earlier start losing bone mass earlier.
- Lifestyle- Alcohol consumption and tobacco use are thought to increase risk for osteoporosis. Lack of exercise may have the same effect.
- Diet- Two important nutrients needed for bone formation are protein and calcium. A diet low in either of these nutrients may lead to osteoporosis.

### **Complications**

In addition to fracture of vertebrae in the spine, spinal stenosis may also result from osteoporosis. Spinal stenosis is a medical condition in which the spinal canal narrows and compresses the spinal cord and nerves. This is usually due to the natural process of spinal degeneration that occurs with aging. However, it can also be caused by spinal disc herniation, osteoporosis or a tumor. Spinal stenosis can affect either the cervical or lumbar vertebrae.

One can observe that osteoporosis and spinal stenosis can go hand to hand. Therefore, treatment should be directed at both conditions. At LSI, while we do not treat osteoporosis, endoscopic spine surgery is an excellent option for treating spinal stenosis.

### **Goals and Methods of Treatment for Osteoporosis**

Since there is currently no cure for osteoporosis, the best recommendation is prevention. In the event that the condition is present, treatment should be pursued. Available treatment options for osteoporosis include:

- Drug therapy – several medications are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis.
- Surgery – In the event that pain is not relieved through medical management, surgery may be performed. This type of surgery is called percutaneous vertebroplasty and involves injecting bone cement (polymethylmethacrylate or PMMA) into the body of the fractured vertebrae.

The main goals of treatment are to slow the progression of the disease, minimize the risks of complications that may cause pain or reduction in function, maximize mobility and reduce the risk of falls and fractures. If these goals are achieved, osteoporosis patients are able to enjoy a relatively active lifestyle.

### **[Other Spine Conditions](#)**



© Laser Spine Institute, LLC 2009 • A Product of [Horizon Marketing](#) • Powered by [Peer360°](#)

LSI



LASER SPINE INSTITUTE

*Get your life back*

The Spinal Column

CONTACT  
USToll Free:  
888-220-6056TAMPA  
SCOTTSDALE  
SAN DIEGO  
[www.laserspineinstitute.com](http://www.laserspineinstitute.com)**Table Of Contents**

- A Proven Leader Joins LSI
- Ask The Expert
- A Pink Angel
- Ask The Doctor
- Give Your Diet a Boost

**Front Page****Subscribe**Interested in receiving this  
newsletter? [Subscribe here!](#)

First Name:

Last Name:

Email address:

I'd like to receive:

HTML   Text

Volume 2 | Issue 7  
July 2009**Give Your Diet a Boost**

Most people know that maintaining a healthy lifestyle through proper diet and exercise can help fight the development of coronary heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and colon cancer. However, few realize these practices can also help with the



management of back pain. Being overweight or physically inactive can significantly contribute to symptoms associated with osteoporosis, arthritis, degenerative disc disease, spinal stenosis, and spondylolisthesis. According to the National Center of Health Statistics, 68 percent of adults in the United States will experience back pain during their lifetime. By eating healthy and exercising, you can avoid becoming a part of that statistic.

There are different ways to prevent osteoporosis and other bone deficiency diseases, and eating a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D is the easiest. However, you can get too much of a good thing. It has been found that when some nutrients are consumed in high amounts, they may actually harm your bones.

Spinach, protein, and caffeine, to name a few, are nutrients that you should not completely eliminate from your diet, but recognize they are best consumed in moderation. Leafy, green vegetables are some of the best foods to eat to help strengthen bones, but, spinach has a high amount of oxalate. Oxalate is a chemical that interferes with your body's ability to absorb calcium, thus having an adverse effect on your goal of strong, healthy bones. To help to reduce this risk, thoroughly cook the spinach to eliminate most of the chemical.

Protein is an essential part of any balanced diet, but a diet

high in animal protein (beef or pork) may cause calcium loss. Animal proteins contain sulfur, which forms an acid in the body. In order to neutralize the acid, your body may release calcium from the bones, which in turn will weaken the bones which can lead to arthritis, and essentially, back pain.

Caffeine also decreases calcium absorption, which sequentially, increases your risk for fractures. Substituting one soft drink or caffeine filled product with one calcium-rich beverage a day will help to fight bone density loss.

If possible avoid foods that may cause constipation, such as potatoes and bananas, which increase pressure in the spinal region. Other food sources such as olive oil and complex carbohydrates, like brown rice, improve digestion and the synovial fluid in joints.

There are also several supplements that boost spine health. Glucosamine chondroitin sulphate helps to regenerate and improve the health of cartilage, fish oil, which is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, supplements joint synovial fluid, and of course, calcium and vitamin D supplements to boost overall bone health and improve the absorption of calcium.

Chronic pain often results in inactivity, boredom, and loneliness, which could lead to eating comfort food. Increased awareness of our eating habits, and selecting healthy foods, vegetables, nuts and fruits, can help to control added pain and health issues. Shifting into a positive direction by taking interest and managing a healthy lifestyle and eating habits will counteract the negative feelings of pain.

### [LSI Resource Center](#)