

Minimally Invasive Cervical and Lumbar Spine Surgery

Dr. Nitin Bhatia, Chief of Spine Surgery, performs minimally invasive cervical and lumbar spine surgery to eliminate painful problems.

Kalei Watt is an energetic mother of three young girls. She loves to exercise at a gym, play tennis and participate in all the activities involved in raising her children.

In late 2006, a car accident changed that. The accident caused discs in her lower back to shift out of position, creating excruciating pain as the bones of her spine rubbed against each other. Her doctor prescribed a heavy regimen of pain-killing drugs.

"I was told I had to take them, but it was awful," Watt said. "I drive a lot because of my girls, and getting in and out of the car used to kill me. I would cry right in front of my kids, the pain was so bad."

"I couldn't live like that. I needed to be healthy again and have a clear head. I had to figure out a better way."

She was referred to Dr. Nitin Bhatia, a fellowship-trained Orthopedic Spine surgeon and co-director of the UC Irvine Comprehensive Spine Program. Dr. Bhatia determined that Watt was a candidate for a minimally invasive fusion procedure in which he would screw together her L5 vertebra and the bone just below it, the sacrum, or S1, while also opening the space for her crushed nerves.

"I had been anti-surgery but at that point I was willing to do whatever it took," Watt said.

In late October 2007, Dr. Bhatia made two tiny incisions in Watt's lower back to insert the surgical instruments and materials, then fused the bones and decompressed the nerves. Watt was up and moving the next day. Within six weeks, Watt was completely mobile and pain-free, even stopping the Tylenol she took post-surgery.

She has nothing but praise for Dr. Bhatia. He always had time for her questions and concerns, she said. "Throughout the whole process he has been calming, kind, thorough, and I have never felt rushed."

The active mother's recovery is near complete. "I've been on zero medications for the past 1-1/2 months," Watt said. "I can bend over and pick up things. Dr. Bhatia thinks I might be able to play tennis soon...Dr. Bhatia gave me my life back."

source: FPR

"Minimally invasive spinal surgery allows us to correct significant problems through small incisions and with minimal disruption of the surrounding tissues," stated Dr. Bhatia. "Although not everybody is a candidate for minimally invasive surgery, it can be very useful for those who are."

Patients should discuss their options with Dr. Bhatia to determine the extent of their spinal problems and whether surgery is a viable option for their treatment. Please call 714-456-7012 or visit www.irvinespine.com for more information.

Dr. Bhatia, a Board Certified and Fellowship Trained spinal surgeon, serves as Director of the Spine Center and Chief of the Orthopaedic Spinal Surgery service at the University of California, Irvine.

For all of our patients, a multi-disciplinary non-surgical approach is used. This approach allows the majority of our patients to improve without surgical intervention. When surgery is necessary, Dr. Bhatia's extensive training in state of

the art techniques including minimally invasive surgery, endoscopic discectomy, percutaneous fusions, X-Stop lumbar stenosis treatment, XLIF, Bone Morphogenetic Protein (BMP), and kyphoplasty help to cure his patients' problems with minimal recovery time and less discomfort than other methods. Dr. Bhatia is considered a world-reknowned expert in various spinal disorders including disc herniations, spinal stenosis, spondylolisthesis, scoliosis, kyphosis, degenerative disc disease (DDD), facet degeneration, spinal cord injury, spinal fractures including compression fractures, radiculopathy, myelopathy, neck pain, and back pain.

The UC Irvine Spine Center provides care for Orange County and the surrounding communities including Irvine, Newport Beach, Corona del Mar, Laguna Niguel, Garden Grove, Fountain Valley, Santa Ana, Fullerton, Westminster, Huntington Beach, Costa Mesa, Long Beach, Anaheim, Brea, Mission Viejo, Temecula, Fallbrook, Hemet, Los Angeles, and Riverside. Patients from outside these communities are welcome at the UCI Spine Center as well. International patients are encouraged to contact us for assistance and coordination of medical care. Dr. Bhatia and his staff are fluent in multiple languages including Spanish, Vietnamese, and Romanian. Se habla español.

For more information: Phone number (714) 456-7012

For further patient education information, please see our website at www.irvinespine.com or <http://www.spineuniverse.com/mdpage.php?doctorID=2688>