

Artificial Disc enables patient to return to active lifestyle

Carolyn's persistent neck pain had stumped several doctors. She didn't have the typical radiating pain symptoms associated with herniated discs. She had been to several clinics but ended up frustrated. Ultimately her journey took her to DenverSpine, a regional spine center that often receives the most complex cases of back and neck pain.

After evaluating Carolyn's symptoms, Dr. Jatana identified the specific disc level in her neck that was generating her pain symptoms.

Carolyn remembers being given two options: the traditional method and one new approach. "The first was fusion surgery," she recalls. "I didn't go with this option because chances are I might need another surgery, due to the extra stress a fusion can cause above and below the fusion site. The second option was the artificial disc. I did my own research on the artificial disc, and decided it seemed like the better option."

The artificial disc represents the best alternative to date for spinal fusion surgery. The artificial disc has been in use in Europe for about 15 years before its introduction into the United States. During a fusion surgery, the damaged disc is typically replaced with bone

from either a patient's hip or a bone bank. After the surgery the two vertebrae are locked in place, which can put additional stress on the discs above and below the fusion site and can eventually cause further disc herniation. With the vertebrae being locked in place, movement is also restricted. The artificial disc, conversely, is engineered to duplicate the rotational properties of a healthy disc, which in turn saves stress on the other discs in the spine.

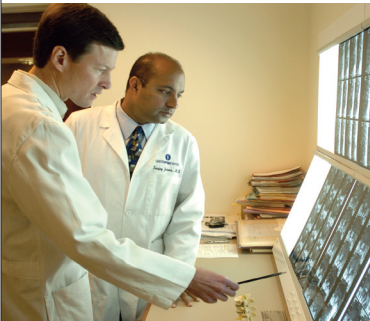


After surgery, Carolyn has nothing but praise for Dr. Jatana. "Dr. Jatana provided me the most current option for back surgery," she says, "he is awesome. And his bedside manner was great."

Being able to enjoy her favorite past times again exceeded Carolyn's expectations. "Bowling is something I haven't been able to do for awhile," says Carolyn, "I'm back in the gym, able to lift weights again. I lifted weights all the time before my injury. Now after the surgery I've been able to gradually get back into it. Beforehand the surgery sounded like a big deal. And it is a big deal. But the recovery process wasn't terrible and it's actually shorter than that of the fusion surgery. The pros certainly outweigh the cons."

Carolyn advises others to get the necessary information so you are well informed about your treatment options. "Conduct some research yourself to see what would be the best option for you," she says. "For me, the artificial disc was the right decision. Since the surgery, I have full mobility and that is wonderful"

"Dr. Jatana gave me a second chance at a normal life," adds Carolyn. "I really didn't realize how much pain I was in and what a toll it was taking on my life. It wears on you, it really does."



Sanjay Jatana, M.D.

Dr. Jatana (shown right) is a fellowship-trained orthopedic spine surgeon. He specializes 100% in spine surgery with additional training in the cervical spine (neck). He also specializes in treating patients who require repeat or revision surgery. He was one of the first surgeons in the Colorado region to be trained in the artificial disc surgery.