Artificial disc replacement gets pilot back in the air after neck injury

JANET, as a pilot for a major airline, had pain symptoms in her upper shoulders that started eight months earlier. Over time, the pain began to radiate into her arms, ultimately causing some weakness in her hands. She tried physical therapy and some injections which didn't provide any relief.

She first thought the pain was related to a previous shoulder injury, until she went to an orthopedic surgeon who performed an X-ray. "The doctor came back into the exam room with the X-ray, shut the door, and said in an ominous tone, you have a serious issue with several disc levels in your neck," Janet remembers. "I was referred to spine surgeon in Denver who did an MRI and said I needed a 3-level fusion of my neck. But that would remove most of the movement in my neck, and could have adversely affected my career as a pilot. I asked my orthopedic surgeon for a different spine surgeon for a second opinion, and he recommended Dr. Jatana.

"Dr. Jatana evaluated my neck and reviewed my MRI," Janet says. "He had a much different opinion. He said it was really only ONE that was causing my symptoms, rather than all three discs. He felt that if I had an artificial disc at that level, it would reduce further problems at the two other levels, and he was right."

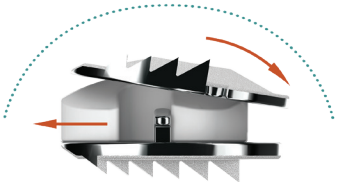
Janet had a Mobi-C artificial disc inserted at C-4/5. "I had surgery at 3pm in the afternoon, and was home around 7pm that same night pain free and eating dinner."

Dr. Sanjay Jatana notes that while spinal fusion has been the traditional treatment for herniated discs in the neck, the latest research has shown that the artificial disc is the best way to prevent herniations to other discs in the neck.

"With the neck there are only seven vertebrae and the discs are crucial to preserving the national rotation of the neck," he explains. "But many older surgeons are not trained in artificial disc surgery, so they often recommend a fusion that no longer is the current or best approach. The Mobi-C disc is FDA-approved for two levels if necessary."

When a herniated disc causes symptoms like radiating pain and weakness into her arm, she relied on Dr. Sanjay Jatana to replace the herniated disc with a new Mobi-C artificial disc and preserve the natural neck motion.

Mobi-C Copyright © LDR



Now several months later, Janet is pain free and back in the cockpit flying her normal routes. She is also back to all of her recreational activities including swimming and kayaking.

"A spinal fusion would have been devastating to me," Janet adds. "Swimming, kayaking, and my job as a pilot requires constant neck motion. And if I had a fusion, flying would have been a challenge. Dr. Jatana from the beginning was very confident in his approach which was very reassuring."

SANJAY JATANA MD
Advanced Care for Complex Neck & Back Problems

Appts & 2nd opinions: **303-697-7463** • **SanjayJatanaMD.com**
MAIN OFFICE: 145 Inverness Drive East, Suite 100, Englewood, CO 80112
Dr. Sanjay Jatana is a board-certified, fellowship-trained spine surgeon who is part of Colorado Spine Partners. Dr. Jatana receives back and neck pain patients from across Colorado, Wyoming and Kansas.
AFFILIATIONS: Advent Health • Rose Medical Center

Spine specialization

Dr. Jatana's practice is referred some of the most complex back and neck patients in the Denver and front range region of Colorado. Of the new patients coming to Dr. Jatana, 25% had previous neck surgery elsewhere. About half of new patients had disc-related symptoms like radicular pain or neurological deficit (weakness or numbness into a hand or arm.) Consequently, Dr. Jatana's spine practice receives many of the failed surgeries generated by other generalist surgeons.

Within his practice at Colorado Spine Partners, Dr. Jatana specializes in complex back and neck surgery. Colorado Spine Partners is the only spine center in Colorado to be included in a list of credentialed spine centers by SpineCenterNetwork.com. Credentialing criteria includes: fellowship-trained spine surgeons; internal or affiliated physical medicine MDs; internal or affiliated spine therapists; an emphasis on nonsurgical treatment options; and a commitment to patient education for a well-informed healthcare consumer.

Clinical outcomes

Surgical Outcomes

The following data relates to 2018 outcomes data. Of the 103 cases performed in 2018, 19% of cases were lumbar spine surgeries, 80% neck surgeries and 1% were spinal cord stimulation implant. In 2018, 13% of the surgeries performed related to revision surgery of a previous surgery performed elsewhere.

- Re-admission to hospital within 30 days of operation (1) 1% (Recurrent disc herniation requiring fusion)
- CSF leak requiring repeat surgery (1) 1% (Revision decompression on previous surgery done elsewhere)
- Infection (0) 0%
- Medical Complication (DVT, PE, pneumonia, stroke, MI) (0) 0%
- Medical re-admission (0) 0%

Return to Function Outcomes: In a clinical outcome study compiled by an outside entity that specializes in spine outcomes tracking, Dr. Jatana succeeded in pain relief and helping complex patients reduce their dependence on pain killers. Case in point: 30% of new patients were taking 5 or more pills daily for pain relief. After three months, that number was reduced to only 15%. At the same time, functional status scores improved. At time of first appointment, 40% of patients said they were limited a lot in carrying groceries. After 3 months, the number reduced to 15%.

The 4 benefits of a 2nd opinion

Because spine surgery is a serious decision, it is a good idea to obtain a second opinion. A second opinion from Dr. Jatana can provide patients the following benefits:

1. Determine if all possible treatment options have been considered and if there are any other nonsurgical options — such as spinal injections or physical therapy — that can relieve symptoms without the need for surgery.
2. If spine surgery is necessary, what type of spine surgery should be performed. A complex fusion procedure may not be necessary.
3. Is there a new artificial disc or implant technology that would provide a better outcome?
4. Help determine if the patient is a candidate for minimally invasive spine procedure in outpatient surgery. This may allow the patient to be home later that same afternoon, for a faster recovery and return to activity.

Sanjay Jatana, MD • Fellowship-trained spine surgeon

Board-certified, fellowship-trained spine surgeon • Specializing in the Treatment of Complex Back & Neck Pain

As a fellowship trained spine surgeon, Dr. Sanjay Jatana specializes in the treatment of complex back and neck problems. He is recognized as one of the top Colorado spine surgeons in spine surgery and motion preservation.

Dr. Jatana has special training in the complex spine problems and treats patients who require repeat or revision surgery. Dr. Jatana completed his residency in orthopedics at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center and was Chief Resident of the Department of Orthopedics. Dr. Jatana is a Diplomate for the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery and a Fellow for the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons. His memberships include North American Spine Society, Arapahoe Medical Society, Colorado Medical Society, Colorado Orthopedic Society and Denver Medical Society.

Patients travel to his Denver office from across Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas and New Mexico. Many of these patients have complex neck problems that have not resolved with treatment where they live. Dr. Jatana is referred some of the most complex neck patients in the Rocky Mountain region. One in four of new patients coming to Dr. Jatana had previous neck surgery elsewhere. Dr. Jatana is often successful in helping these complex patients recover and reduce their dependence on pain killers.

During spine surgery, Dr. Jatana employs spinal cord monitoring techniques and a microscope for safety and accuracy. His goal is to accurately identify the pain source so that surgery is successful in relieving symptoms.

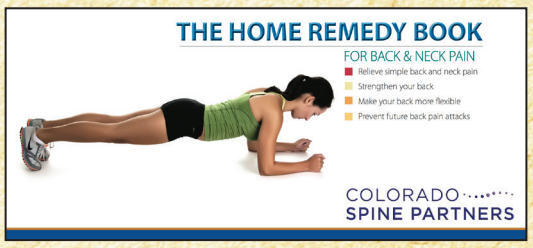
In addition to artificial disc replacement surgery options, Dr. Jatana is proficient in minimally invasive spine surgery which reduces the length of the incision to reduce blood loss, lessen time in the hospital, and speed return to activity with a less painful recovery.

Dr. Jatana is trained in many of the artificial disc options for neck surgery, including Mobi-C and Prodisc-C. He also provides other specialized motion preservation surgeries for the neck, such as Cervical Lamino-Foraminotomy and Cervical Laminoplasty.

After surgery, Dr. Jatana prefers to follow his patients for at least two years to ensure long-term positive results. More information is at out educational Internet site at **SanjayJatanaMD.com.**

PATIENT EDUCATION TOOLS FOR PRIMARY PHYSICIANS

Dr. Jatana believes the best healthcare starts with a well-informed consumer. The spine practice has an on-line encyclopedia at **SanjayJatanaMD.com** with symptom charts, home remedies and a library of back and neck exercises that can relieve symptoms. Dr. Jatana provides to primary care physicians and chiropractors free copies of a 36-page Home Remedy Book that has helped thousands of people with symptom relief. The Home Remedy Book can be requested by calling our office at 303-697-7463. We also provide a copies of our Symptom Chart that helps people understand symptoms, and when watchful waiting cannot be used (numbness/weakness), and when to see the doctor.



Appointments, referrals & second opinions:
303-697-7463.