

Arthritis doesn't cripple patient's lifestyle

Donald has lived with the pain and complications of rheumatoid arthritis for several decades. In addition to the pain associated with his arthritis, he began experiencing neck pain along with upper extremity sensory changes. Some symptoms often associated with this condition include severe headaches, dizziness and even burning or prickling (paresthesias). After a visit with his primary care physician in September 2007, Donald was referred to Dr. Dov Rand at North Jersey Spine Group.

During his first visit, Dr. Rand performed diagnostic tests that included gathering medical history information along with x-rays and a MRI. Based on Dr. Rand's findings, Donald then met with Dr. Rajnik Raab, a neurological spine surgeon at North Jersey Spine Group. Dr. Raab discussed with Donald the results of the x-rays and MRI. Dr. Raab explained to Donald his options, because his condition could worsen if left untreated.

Dr. Raab determined that Donald would need an Occipital Cervical Fusion from the back of the skull to C5 in order to relieve

the pain symptoms and correct the problems caused by his arthritis. The procedure was needed in order to prevent the top of the spinal column from pushing further through the opening at the base of the skull due

During the surgery, Dr. Raab placed bone graft posteriorly for the fusion and the spine was supported with posterior spinal hardware from the back of the skull to C5 to stabilize it as the fusion healed. Over time, the vertebrae "fused" together into a single solid structure. While this procedure limits movement and flexibility, it prevents the development of spinal cord and brain-stem compression which could result in paralysis or death.

Six months later, Donald is free of neck pain and able to return to his normal activities. "The physicians and staff at North Jersey Spine Group were very personable and helpful to me," says Donald.

"Dr. Raab was thorough and explained in detail my condition and the surgical procedure he would perform - all in a way I could easily understand," Donald remarks.



After suffering from severe neck pain including sensory changes, Donald has now returned to his normal activities without the neck pain.

to the instability from his rheumatoid arthritis. The sensory loss symptoms Donald was experiencing were due to compression of the spinal cord. Injury to his spinal cord could occur if his condition went untreated.

Rajnik W. Raab, M.D. is a board-eligible neurological surgeon specializing in the treatment of back and neck problems including spine surgery. He uses the latest in minimally invasive spine surgery instrumentation which decreases the size of incisions, shortens hospital stay, and speeds return to activity.

Dr. Raab has lived in the Jersey region for more than 20 years, graduating from Yale, in New Haven, CT, with his Bachelor of Arts. He then went on to medical school, completing his medical degree at the State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn in 1997. He subsequently completed an internship in general surgery at the New Jersey Medical School, followed by a residency in neurosurgery at the same location.

Dr. Raab and Dr. Sundstrom have teamed together for more than four years and have worked with hospitals in Bergen, Morris and Passaic counties. Dr. Raab is a member of the American Medical Association, the American Association of Neurosurgeons, the Congress of Neurological Surgeons and the Alpha Omega Alpha Society.



Dr. Rajnik W. Raab, MD

NONSURGICAL SPINE CARE:

Dov Rand, MD, Board Eligible Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
 Kimberly Baubles, MSPT, MTC, BSHS, CCI, Spine Specialized Physical Therapist

SPINE SURGEONS:

David Sundstrom, MD, Board Certified Neurological Surgeon, Specializing in Spine Surgery
 Rajnik W. Raab, MD, Board Eligible Neurological Surgeon, Specializing in Spine Surgery