

Laser offers “band-aid” back surgery

FRECKLE-SIZED INCISION. Dr. Katzman performs minimally invasive laser spine surgery, placing an incision so small that it can be covered with a standard adhesive bandage.

Scott S. Katzman, MD, P.A.

A car accident in October 2004 left Brenda Oyola with serious back injuries.

“I had bulging discs in my lumbar spine, and sometimes I’d go numb all down my left side,” she describes. “I had muscle spasms. I couldn’t stand for very long or walk long distances. Even lifting my arms up to open a kitchen cabinet caused a lot of pain.”

“I was scared,” Brenda confides. “I have a young daughter, and suddenly, I couldn’t even pick her up. I thought I’d be on painkillers or have to injections all my life.”

Fortunately, Brenda was referred to Scott S. Katzman, MD, a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon who specializes in minimally invasive orthopaedic surgeries.

“Because conservative approaches still left Brenda with an unacceptable level of pain,” says Dr. Katzman, “I suggested an advanced surgical procedure — I sometimes call it *band-aid back surgery* — to treat the herniated discs in her lumbar spine and to reduce her painful facet joints that further impinged on pain-generating nerves.”

Laser spine surgery

The surgery Dr. Katzman suggested is accomplished through puncture incisions no larger than a freckle. His “scalpel” is a precisely controlled laser that can reduce the bulging tissue of herniated spinal

discs and reduce the bony tissue pressing against sensitive nerves.

“Laser spine surgery is minimally invasive, causes no thermal damage to surrounding tissue, can be performed with the patient under local anesthesia, and requires no sutures,” lists Dr. Katzman. “It is an outpatient procedure, provides a quick recovery and return to normal activities, and is an effective remedy for acute as well as chronic pain.”

“I was so *nervous* about having surgery,” Brenda remembers, “but, now, I’m so glad I did!”

“Shortly after the surgery, I went to Universal Studios, and I was sure I’d have a hard time making the drive. I didn’t. I thought I’d have to rent a wheelchair or motorized scooter to get around, but I walked all day. I was tired, because I hadn’t been active in so long,” Brenda admits, “but I wasn’t in pain.”

“Everything is changing for the better,” she continues. “I’m able to play with my daughter, I can drive, and I can do my housework. I waited to return to work for a little while because I’m a home health aide, and that work is strenuous, but now, thanks to Dr. Katzman, I’m back to being *me!*”

FHCN—Billie S. Noakes



Scott S. Katzman, MD, is board certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. He completed his undergraduate studies at the University of California at San Diego and earned his medical degree at Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA. Dr. Katzman served his general surgery internship at the University of California, San Francisco, and his residency in orthopaedic surgery at the University of Arizona Health Sciences Center, Tucson, where he also completed a spine mini-fellowship. Dr. Katzman has published and lectured extensively on topics in orthopaedic surgery, and he is a leader in the development of minimally invasive joint replacement techniques.

Small incision hip replacement

A new technique for performing hip replacement now allows these weight-bearing joints to be placed with a surgery that uses only small incisions, with upgraded components that last for many years.

Dr. Katzman developed the procedure, and he has taught the technique for both Biomed and Johnson & Johnson.

“The procedure can be accomplished in about 90 minutes,” he reports. “A small incision is made to allow the surgeon to spread, rather than cut through, most

of the muscles and ligaments surrounding the hip, which allows for a much quicker recovery. Most patients return home within 48 hours, while others are treated on an outpatient basis. Most patients will complete their postsurgical outpatient physical therapy within two weeks.”

Because the surgery is minimally invasive and provides such quick recovery times, Dr. Katzman points out that it is an excellent surgery for younger, active patients as well as those of more advanced years.

Shouldering aside the pain

SHRUGGING OFF THE PAIN. Laser shoulder surgery allowed Bob to return to his career in dietary management.

Laser orthopaedic surgery isn’t only for patients with back pain.

It effectively relieved Robert S. “Bob” Hall’s shoulder pain.

“I’ve been in the restaurant business most of my life,” relates this dietary manager. “I move cases of canned goods onto shelved carts, open and empty boxes, and shift bulk foods around. I developed arthritis and bony growths in my right shoulder that restricted its movement. It hurt to bend my arm and raise my elbow, or reach overhead. Sometimes the pain was so bad that I couldn’t sleep at night.”

Bob knew exactly how to handle the problem. “I went to Dr. Katzman. He had performed my back surgery a few months earlier and delivered excellent results. I had a lot of confidence in him.”

“Dr. Katzman performed laser surgery on my



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shoulder,” says Bob. “It took about 45 minutes, but he recontoured my shoulder bone so it didn’t compress the nerve or restrict movement anymore.”

“I’m impressed with Dr. Katzman’s skill,” says Bob, “but I’m even more impressed with his attitude. Other orthopaedic surgeons had told me my spine and shoulder pain couldn’t be treated, that I had to live with that pain. Dr. Katzman told me he could solve the problem.”

“And he did.”

Scott S. Katzman, MD

A leader in minimally invasive orthopaedic surgery

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