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James P. Weiner, MD, is board certified by the American Board of Anesthesiology. He received his medical degree and completed his residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk, and completed an anesthesia residency and received fellowship training in pain management at the Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, VA. He also received fellowship training in anesthesia at Bowman-Gray Medical Center, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC. He is a member of the American Association of Electrodiagnostic Medicine, American Association of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, American Society of Anesthesiology, Florida Medical Society, Florida Society of Anesthesiology, International Association for the Study of Pain, and International Spinal Injection Society. He has published extensively in his areas of expertise.



Peter S. Schreiber, DO, is board certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation. He completed his undergraduate studies in microbiology at the University of Florida, Gainesville, and received his medical degree from Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Davie, FL. He served his internship and a combined residency in internal medicine and physical medicine and rehabilitation at Case Western Reserve University/MetroHealth Medical Center, Cleveland, OH. Dr. Schreiber is a member of the American Medical Association, American Osteopathic Association, and American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.



Robert D. Mehrberg, MD, is a board-certified physiatrist, certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation, as well as in electrodiagnostic medicine. He completed his undergraduate studies and earned his medical degree at Tulane University, New Orleans, LA. He served his internship and his residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk, where he was appointed chief resident. Dr. Mehrberg has lectured on, written, or coauthored numerous articles, abstracts, presentations, and publications concerned with the treatment and well being of rehabilitation patients. Dr. Mehrberg is a member of the American Association of Electrodiagnostic Medicine, American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and Association of Academic Physiatrists.



Pierre R. Hyppolite, MD, is fellowship-trained in spinal cord injury through the University of Miami's Jackson Memorial Hospital/ Miami VA Medical Center. He is a graduate of the Faculte De Medicine Et De Pharmacie Universite D'etat d'Haiti, where he earned his medical degree and served his medical internship. Dr. Hyppolite attended Yale University School of Public Health and served an internal medicine internship at the New York Medical College's Our Lady of Mercy Medical Center. He completed his residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at NYMC's Metropolitan Hospital Center. Dr. Hyppolite is an associate member of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and the American Paraplegia Society. He is fluent in English, French, and Creole.

MANAGING CHRONIC PAIN

For some pain patients, 100% resolution is not an option, but a skilled pain management team can improve both function and quality of life.



"The spinal cord stimulator really helps me to be able to play golf," says Walt.

FHCN PHOTOS BY TONIA SILVERS

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allow the patient to function, providing as much pain relief as possible," explains the doctor. "For Walt, the spinal cord stimulator, along with the medication management and injections that we do, has been able to improve his quality of life."

A happy patient

Walt confirms that the combination of treatments has enabled him to lead a more active life while immediately reducing his pain medication.

"I had the spinal cord stimulator installed about two years ago, and the minute that was in, I was able to go from six Percocets a day down to two," he reports. "I didn't want to be hooked on something like that, and I believe that taking two a day does calm down the nerve pain."

He credits Dr. Mehrberg for paying attention to his concerns and finding the right treatment for his problem instead of just treating the symptoms.

"Dr. Mehrberg has been great. He's been right there in my corner ever since I first saw him. He thinks it's fabulous that I'm capable of playing golf," reports Walt. "He said most people in my shape would just be in bed, crying the blues, but not me!"

"I believe he is one of the best doctors around. He's very informative, and he tries to make me understand that there are things I can do to help myself a little bit more. He's one who will make sure that I'm doing what I'm supposed to as far as controlling the medication. So I put Dr. Mehrberg on the top of the list."

Walt offers a piece of advice for those who suffer from unresolved chronic pain: don't give up.

"I just want people to know, if it wasn't for the spinal cord stimulator, I would not be out of bed now, doing what I'm doing," he says. "The experience has been great." **FHCN—Michael J. Sahn**

"I jet skied for about ten years very ruggedly, running up and down the river here in Ft. Myers, and I believe my back got messed up from bouncing around on that," reflects Walt Watson. "I had two back surgeries seven years ago, but then I had to go in for a third operation."

After his third back surgery, performed by Dr. Wesley Faunce of Southwest Florida Neurosurgical Associates, he was referred to Robert D. Mehrberg, MD, for pain management.

"Once you get an operation done like that, they send you over to a pain management doctor to see what they can do to try and control any pain that remains," explains Walt. "When I first went to Dr. Mehrberg, I was taking six Percocet® a day and had been doing so for about five to six years."

"I'm always going to be in pain, but when I first saw him, I was in a lot of pain. And he has just been fabulous. He's a very caring doctor."

Comprehensive approach

Dr. Mehrberg explains that for patients

like Walt with unresolved chronic pain, the condition often can be neither reversed nor completely resolved. The goal is to reduce the patient's pain as much as possible.

"We have a wide variety of treatments that we can offer in our practice, and we work closely with the surgeons," he says. "We provide injection therapy and physical therapy, and we can also offer treatments like spinal cord stimulators, and pain medicines which are not addictive, which can be helpful as well. Basically, we can use a variety of tools to improve a patient's lifestyle and quality of life."

Dr. Mehrberg notes that in Walt's case, the opportunity existed to reduce his need for narcotic medications as well as provide him with state-of-the-art pain treatments.

"Walt is still on a small amount of pain medicine, but not nearly what he was taking previously," notes Dr. Mehrberg. "We also have done injections for him in his back, which have helped periodically, and then we ultimately offered him a spinal cord stimulator."

"Our goal is to reduce the pain and

RELIEF AT LAST

The staff at Southwest Florida Rehab & Pain Management Associates and Southwest Florida Neurosurgical Associates welcome your questions and comments regarding this article. For additional information or to schedule a consultation, please call or visit one of their conveniently located offices: in Fort Myers at **(239) 432-0774, 12700 Creekside Ln., Suite 301**, and in Cape Coral at **(239) 772-5577, 632 Del Prado Blvd. North, Suite 101**.

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