

# Bringing Back Health at The Spine Institute

According to the National Institutes of Health, 80 percent of adults will suffer from back pain at some time in their life. With luck, the discomfort resolves quickly and without treatment. Sometimes, however, pain can persist for extended periods and often becomes debilitating.

To help patients living with chronic or acute back pain regain their quality of life, CentraState Medical Center created The Spine Institute of Central New Jersey.

"We treat more than 500 patients suffering from acute spine pain every year," says Brian Mason, PT, DPT, clinical director, Rehabilitation Services, CentraState. "The Spine Institute was developed in response to the epidemic of spine pain cases we're seeing."

## MULTIDISCIPLINARY CARE

The Spine Institute offers a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to back pain that includes nonsurgical, minimally invasive, and surgical options for relieving discomfort and addressing underlying causes. Patients are generally accepted by physician referral to The Spine Institute and undergo an initial evaluation that allows specialists there to develop an appropriate treatment plan.

"Surgical options are available for patients who could benefit from more aggressive treatment, but not all patients require surgery," says Grigory

Goldberg, MD, fellowship-trained spine surgeon and co-director, The Spine Institute, along with neurosurgeon Timothy Link, MD. "A patient may have

success by participating in physical therapy or undergoing treatment from a pain management specialist," Dr. Goldberg adds.

## ONE PATIENT'S SUCCESS

Frank Steffich, 36, was no stranger to back pain when the Freehold resident began suffering pain in his lower back that radiated down his left leg. This time, however, the pain was far more severe.



Dhimant Balar, DO,  
sports medicine specialist

"I work at CentraState's Wound Treatment

Center and one of our physical therapists recommended that I see Dr. Dhimant Balar," Frank says. Dr. Balar, a board-certified internal medicine physician and sports medicine specialist on staff at CentraState, is part of The Spine Institute physician team. "Because I sought treatment quickly, my pain was resolved with a couple of trigger point injections [injections of anesthetic to relax the area of intense muscle spasms at the site of pain] and physical therapy," Frank adds.

## CHANGING BAD HABITS

He explains that physical therapy at The Spine Institute helped him become more aware of his posture and adopt more appropriate techniques for lifting and bending. By altering habits such as slouching while sitting, he was able to avoid surgery.

Today, he is pain-free and enjoys biking and spending time with his wife, Jennifer, and their two young children, Jack and Leah.

## First-Class Care

The Spine Institute of Central New Jersey at CentraState Medical Center is one of only 33 spine centers nationwide certified by the McKenzie Institute International, a worldwide leader in noninvasive, therapeutic treatment of spinal pain. Specialists on staff include neurosurgeon Timothy Link, MD, and spine surgeon Grigory Goldberg, MD, co-directors of The Spine Institute; anesthesiologist and pain management specialist Mariam Ghobriel, MD; sports medicine specialist Dhimant Balar, DO; and Todd Cooperman, MD, doctor of physical medicine and rehabilitation.

"When I was dealing with back pain, I couldn't even stand up straight or walk 10 to 15 feet," says Frank. "Don't ignore pain. Seek help, and listen to your physicians and therapists. They know what they're doing."

**To learn more about The Spine Institute, call 855-SPINENJ (855-774-6365) or visit [www.centrastate.com/spine](http://www.centrastate.com/spine).** HD



Grigory Goldberg, MD,  
spine surgeon



▲ Since undergoing treatment for severe back pain at The Spine Institute of Central New Jersey at CentraState, Frank Steffich can fully enjoy spending time with his family and participating in other favorite activities.