

MEDICAL NEWS

More Information for Headache Sufferers

Botox Helps Heal Headaches, Giving Naperville Resident Her Life Back

Life comes with its own share of aches and pains, and one of the most common is headaches. According to the Migraine Research Foundation [www.migraineresearchfoundation.org] migraine is "a real illness and ranks in the top 20 of the world's most disabling medical illnesses."

The Foundation estimates that over 10-percent of the world's population, including children, suffers from migraine, and that here in the U.S. nearly one in four households is affected.

Naperville resident, Kelly Pigott has been one of those people. About 17 years ago, the married mother of three began to experience her first bout of headaches which eventually developed into debilitating migraines. Appeals to local doctors brought little success.

"I was eventually having the migraines several times a week. When I went to the Emergency Room they would give me Delaudid, but sometimes that only gave me some relief, not total relief, from the migraine." Pigott said.

"Delaudid is a strong narcotic that may lead to rebound headaches, if used repeatedly.

There is a growing body of knowledge suggesting that, over time, headaches may be actually caused by the medications people take to get rid of them. Many studies showed that pain medications can cause MOH or medication overuse headaches" Dr Suwan Said.

Pigott then took the next step and decided to go north to Minnesota and the Mayo Clinic. She reasoned that its reputation for being a top-notch medical facility would mean she might finally find some relief.

Her breakthrough of the pain cycle finally arrived at the clinic through Botox injections, which doctors have found can provide lasting relief for migraine sufferers. But in Pigott's case, relief didn't come without a cost. "First of all, many insurance companies - including mine - won't cover the cost of Botox injections," Pigott said. "The other issues were that we had to drive over 300-miles to the clinic, pay for meals and a hotel, and then drive back - all of that in addition to the treatments. The costs were really starting to mount."

Pigott said her condition required a Minnesota pilgrimage once every three months - a regimen she continued for a year and a half. Then one day, she noticed a story in a local newspaper about an area doctor and a pain clinic that was operated nearby, and although Pigott didn't realize it at first, the time and expense of going to the Mayo Clinic was about to end.

"I read about Dr. Suwan and the pain clinic, and I've been coming here for about nine months now," Pigott said. "I brought in all my medical records, and we talked about my condition and all the treatments I had been through. I found her to be very sensitive and compassionate. She listened to my stories about my case, and I told her I found relief with the Botox injections. And that's how we've been treating the headaches."

Pigott characterizes Suwan's idea of patient care as being above and beyond the service level most doctors offer. It has included access to Suwan's email and even a personal cell number if a migraine should suddenly develop.

"Dr. Suwan has offered to come into her office after hours if I absolutely needed it," Pigott said. "She's really gone beyond the point most doctors are willing to go."

These days, Pigott is able to go longer between Botox injections and has received only two treatments in over 10 months, rather than every 90-days. She had the two treatments that were 3 months apart, in the begin-



N. Suwan, M.D.

ning, and she did not need any in the last 7 months."

We hope that Kelly may not need more treatments in the future" Dr. Suwan said. While the treatments remain expensive, Dr. Suwan has worked with the Naperville resident to set up a more convenient payment schedule in order to meet the financial obligations her insurance won't cover.

She also doesn't need to make a 600-mile drive any longer and feels relieved knowing there is help if she needs it right around the corner. The feeling of closeness and convenience is great.

Most of all, she's happy to have found a doctor she can trust and to have her life back.


"I have three kids between 11 and 17-years old, and when these headaches came, I couldn't work or be a mom or a wife," she said. "When you're bed-ridden, you can't take care of your family. I'm functioning 100-percent better, and my family is glad I'm back."

"Kelly is a wonderful person with a great family, and I wish her the best of luck." Dr Suwan said. "I am glad that I was able to make a difference in Kelly's life."

Dr. Suwan is a Loyola University trained board certified neurologist, board certified in electrodiagnostic medicine, board certified in pain medicine, with extra certification in headache medicine. Dr. Suwan served as a director of University Pain Center Headache Clinic that is affiliated with Rush University Pain Center. She is a member of the American Headache Society, National Headache Foundation, American Academy of Pain Medicine and American Society of Interventional Pain Management Physicians. Currently, she is the director of Chicago Headache Clinic, and Chicago Academy of Pain and Spine. Her areas of clinical expertise include migraine headaches, chronic daily headaches and other types of headaches and facial pain syndromes, and pain syndromes related to nerve disorders.

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