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## HEALTH



Clinical radiologist and lead consultant Dr Hany Elmadbouh with Bruce Dodworth at Avicenna Clinic, where the procedure was carried out

# Bruce endures first MRI spinal injection in UK

**A groundbreaking procedure - the first MRI spinal injection - has been carried out in the UK on a Stamford man and could provide welcome pain relief to millions more.**

Bruce Dodworth, a 50-year-old business man from Stamford, was in the shower when his nagging back finally gave up. Having suffered a similar injury nine years previously, he was well-aware of the agony, immobility and road to recovery ahead of him.

What he wasn't aware of was the development of a new procedure that would see him walking upright immediately and with 70 per cent of his normal movement returned within two months.

The procedure, a spinal injection, with image guided assistance from an open MRI scanner, is still a new development and one which had not, until now, been carried out in the UK.

This ground-breaking procedure was completed by consultant radiologist Dr Hany Elmadbouh, at Avicenna Clinic in Peterborough.

"The issue with conditions like Bruce's is that the patient needs to be able to return to normal posture and movement to aid recovery. Without

this, the cycle of pain would simply continue. And without significant pain relief, he was never going to stand up straight," said Dr Elmadbouh.

"So, I recommended that we carry out a selective nerve root injection, as a first course of treatment, after which he could be referred to a spinal surgeon if it did not work.

"The clarity and focus of an interventional MRI-guided procedure, combined with the accessibility enabled by the 'open format' is far superior to the use of more traditional imaging methods such as ultrasound, CT and X-ray. It also avoids the potentially damaging risks of X-ray and CT radiation. With complex spine and root nerve related issues it is important to use the most effective technology to ensure the area targeted with the treatment is more precise and therefore successful.

"Surgery should always be a last resort."

Last year, according to Office of National Statistics, 30.8 million days were lost because of musculoskeletal problems including back pain, neck and upper limb.

As a business owner, Bruce knew he could not afford to take the time off. He had to work through the agony and immobility to keep up with his

busy work and travel schedule and client demands.

Bruce said: "I run my own public relations business and travel a fair amount in the process. Whilst I could try to re-arrange/sub-contract non-essential work, there were some things I had to just get on with. But it was the pressure of needing to find a solution that led me to Dr Elmadbouh. I didn't go out looking for this procedure specifically. In fact, until I was told about it, I had no idea it existed."

After seeing some pain return a few days after the procedure, Bruce has seen a continual improvement in the weeks that followed. In fact, the results have been so astounding that Mr Wojcik, the spinal surgeon he was referred to by Dr Hany, has since confirmed there is no need to consider surgery at this stage.

With some regular physiotherapy to aid his full recovery, Bruce no longer needs the surgery that would have put him in pain and recovery for many months to come.

"I'm delighted," says Bruce, "I honestly didn't expect the results to be so transformational. I am 70 per cent back to normal, am no longer taking the cocktail of painkillers and am enjoying life again."

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