**Overcoming Ulcerative Colitis**

When medication management fails to stop the problem, a surgical solution gives this patient her life back.

Katherine Thornton's battle with ulcerative colitis ultimately became a battle for her life.

"I tried every medicine conceivable for ulcerative colitis," she says, "and nothing worked. If it started to work, I became allergic to the medicine and they had to stop it, and I was on some really potent medicines."

The results were devastating and nearly fatal.

"I spent two years at home and couldn't go anywhere except to the doctor's office. And I would even have to stop to go to the bathroom on the way. It was very debilitating.

"I ended up in the hospital by ambulance four times," reports Katherine. "Apparently, I had gotten to the point where I was probably within two weeks of dying."

On the way to the hospital, she was introduced to Cesar A. Santiago, MD, a board-certified colorectal surgeon with The Colorctal Institute.

"Dr. Santiago told me he could make me better," says Katherine, "but I was still frightened. He really put my mind at ease about everything."

"He said, I can make you normal again. And he did!"

Leading-edge edge procedure

Dr. Santiago and his colleagues, Valerine R. Dyke, MD, and Janette U. GAW, MD, are the only fellowship-trained colorectal surgeons operating in Lee County, and they treat a wide range of disorders, from colon cancer to hemorrhoids.

"Many patients try medical management for ulcerative colitis but may have all kinds of side effects from medication," says Dr. Santiago. "For ulcerative colitis, that is not responding to steroids or to immunosuppressant or chemotherapeutic agents, there is a surgical option that can free patients from the symptoms of ulcerative colitis.

"Katherine suffered from toxic colitis, so I had to remove her colon and then did staged surgery, where I removed the rest of the rectum and created a neo-rectum in a procedure called ileal pouch-anal anastomosis, also known as a pouch reconstruction procedure.

"In the past, people would have a stoma bag from this, but now we can reconstruct the patient and literally create a pouch so that he or she can have normal bowel movements without the need of a stoma.

"People used to be referred out to specialized centers in Tampa or Miami for these procedures, but our practice now performs it right here in our community. Katherine was miserable for years, and she has really turned around, thanks to this option."

**The Colorctal Institute**

VALERINE R. DYKE, MD

ANETTE U. GAW, MD

CESAR A. SANTIAGO, MD

**THE COLORCTAL INSTITUTE**

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**Every part of you deserves a caring specialist**

To schedule a consultation, call (239) 275-0728 for any of these locations:

- Ft. Myers, Boca Raton, Cape Coral, Lehigh Acres

**Are You Headed for a Fall?**

Dizziness and balance problems can lead to falls, which are the number one cause of death from injury among those 65 and older. Fortunately, there is help.

Jack Nuber says his balance had been deteriorating: "I tried to get help, but I don't even remember how many doctors I saw . . . but no one could help me . . ."

Then Jack was treated at Dizziness and Balance Center of Southwest Florida. He says, "I wish I’d discovered this five years ago."

**Fall prevention**

Dizziness and Balance Center of Southwest Florida specializes in helping patients regain their balance and offers a comprehensive evaluation, individualized treatment, and intensive patient and family education. For them, dizziness and balance is not an add-on program; it is all they do.

The number one indicator for fall risk is a previous fall. Other indications include symptoms of dizziness, decreased activity level, taking one or more medications, decreased sense of smell or taste, and fear of falling. "Falls are typically not the result of a single cause or risk factor," educates Shella. "More often than not, they are the result of a combination of factors."

Such was the case for Harry Gleitz.

"Harry has several different components affecting his balance problems, including a vestibular weakness combined with orthopedic and neurological impairments," describes Shella.

"I play tennis and I was absolutely unable to move backwards without falling. One of my legs is shorter than the other and I have spinal stenosis," confides Harry. Since receiving balance and vestibular rehab at Dizziness and Balance Center of Southwest Florida, Harry is once again playing tennis, golfing, and continuing to participate in a mild physical therapy program on his own. "Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV) is a disorder that causes vertigo, dizziness and other symptoms precipitated by a change in head position."

But rearing up and rolling over in bed are two common ‘problem’ motions. About 50% of dizziness is people over age 65 is due to BPPV.

Frances Houghton, who suffered with BPPV for years until she consulted with Dizziness and Balance Center, says, "In the first treatment my vertigo was gone. It’s miraculous . . ."

"Not all balance problems can be solved in just one treatment," acknowledges Shella. "However, we are educated and trained to identify the precise balance problems and then determine the most appropriate physical therapy treatments for them.

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Shella welcomes your inquiries regarding this article. For further information or to schedule an appointment, please call (239) 433-1777. Dizziness and Balance Center of Southwest Florida is located at 5995 South Pointe Blvd., Suite 110, in Ft. Myers. For more information, please visit www.BalanceSWFL.com

**VERTEBRAL BALANCE REHAB**

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