



CHARLES AND BARBARA BEATTY



"I woke up with no pain for the first time in 46 years. I thought I would go to my grave with pain." - Barbara

Ages: 63 and 64
Hometown: Naalehu, HI
Surgeon: Dr. Jon Graham of Jon F. Graham, MD, LLC,
Honolulu, HI
Indications: Injury and scoliosis
Procedure: XLIF®
Surgery Dates: July 8, 2010 and March 3, 2011

Life Prior to Surgery: Married couple Charles (Charlie) and Barbara Beatty had both been plagued by back and leg pain for many years. Though the causes of their pain were very different both eventually needed to have the same surgical procedure to find relief.

Barbara's back pain began when she was a teenager and she was hit by a car as she walked across the street. The accident led to Barbara having both impact and compression injuries. To manage the pain Barbara had various physical therapy routines over the years, which would temporarily help, but the pain would always return. She also tried pain medications and injections, but still did not find long-term relief. It was not until more than 40 years after her injury that surgeons said they could do something to help address the pain. Barbara had trouble walking, sitting, and lifting and she had pain extending down her legs. She was referred to Dr. Jon Graham's office and he encouraged her to try pain management. Then, about two years later, Barbara had another disc collapse in her back and surgery could no longer be put off.


Charlie's back and leg problems were more a culmination of years of various injuries, which began after "64 years of playing hard and goofing off." Charlie and Barbara lived in Alaska before they moved to Hawaii and were always very active. Charlie spent 28 years in law enforcement—a very physical job—and was in five minor plane crashes during that time. To manage his pain Charlie had injections over the years and also tried physical therapy, but none of the conservative treatments he tried provided him with long-term relief. He also consulted with Dr. Graham to see what options he had to stop his back and leg pain.

Dr. Graham recommended that both Barbara and Charlie have XLIF (eXtreme Lateral Interbody Fusion) procedures, and he decided to have them do the surgeries eight months apart so that they would be able to help take care of each other after the procedures. Unfortunately, right before Barbara was about to have her surgery, the insurance company denied her claim. She had to go through five months of appeals and denials before the procedure was finally approved. Charlie, luckily, did not have the same problem with insurance and he had his procedure as planned.

Situation Today: Barbara woke up from her surgery and realized for the first time in 46 years that she had no pain. She stayed in the hospital for five days after surgery because she lives far from the hospital and Dr. Graham wanted to be sure she was healing before having her discharged. Upon returning home Barbara began physical therapy and aqua therapy so she could rebuild her strength. She also wore a back brace for six months for extra stability while she was recovering. Now, she can do basically anything she wants but is still careful when lifting and bending.

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CHARLES and BARBARA'S STORY


Charlie had his XLIF[®] procedure eight months after Barbara. He also stayed in the hospital for five days before being discharged so Dr. Graham could ensure that he was healing well before going home. He took pain medication after leaving the hospital and wore a back brace for three months after surgery for extra stability. Like Barbara, Charlie also did aqua therapy to regain his strength. He and Barbara have a macadamia nut farm in Hawaii and working on the farm was all the exercise he needed to help regain his strength. He said it was probably easier for him to go through the surgery because he knew what was coming since, "Barb blazed the trail." Now, Charlie has noticed a dramatic difference in his back pain. He does feel some pain when he sits for long periods of time and still has some pain in his leg, but Charlie is so grateful for the minimally disruptive XLIF procedure. His brother had back surgery 20 years ago and Charlie saw how difficult his recovery was.

Both Barbara and Charlie have seen an increase in their quality of life since their surgeries and they are so grateful to be feeling better!

Important Note: As with any spine surgery, there are potential benefits and possible risks associated with the XLIF procedure. Individual results will vary. It is important that you discuss the possible risks and potential benefits of XLIF with your doctor prior to receiving treatment, and that you rely on your physician's judgment. Only your doctor can determine whether you are a suitable candidate for this procedure.

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