

# NEW Neurosurgery Clinic Helps WUPS Radio Owner

Sindy Fuller had intense pain in her left leg and buttock for more than five months before she sought medical attention.

"It hurt if I would sit for any length of time," she said. "I had to fidget like a child in my seat just to ease the pain and then, when I did stand up, I could hardly walk. I had no idea what was wrong, but the pain was at times unbearable."

Sindy, president and owner of radio station WUPS, didn't have time in her busy schedule to give in to pain, so she kept living with it - and living with it - until one day she could take it no more.

"I was sitting in a restaurant with a client and we got up to leave and I was in so much pain I limped all the way to the door. It was so embarrassing. I decided then and there I was going to do something about it."

Sindy went to see her physician who ordered an MRI.

"The MRI showed I had a cyst that was pushing on my spine between my fourth and fifth vertebrae," she said. "My only option was surgery. Living and working in Houghton Lake, I immediately thought I would have to travel to the tri-cities or further for the surgery."

## A CALL THAT CHANGED HER LIFE

The very next day, "Dr. Jagannathan called my radio station to place some advertising for the neurosurgery clinics he was holding at West Branch Regional Medical Center," she said. "If that wasn't divine intervention I don't know what is!

"I told him about my MRI findings and that I was in a tremendous amount of pain. He offered to give me a second opinion. I told him that I had not chosen a doctor yet and he said he would take a look at my MRI and give me my options. In the meantime, I checked him out online, listened to his interview on my station and once I met him, I was confident I wanted him to do my surgery."

Dr. Jagannathan is one of four neurosurgeons who hold clinics at WBRMC. The neurosurgery clinics are at the medical center as a result of a partnership between the medical center and Michigan Rural Healthcare Preservation (MRHP) led by Dr. Gerald Schell of Saginaw Valley Neurosurgery. Dr. Kevin Lawson of Soo Surgical Specialties and Dr. Mark Adams also see patients in the clinics.

"Sindy had a cyst originating in one of the joints in her spine, which caused substantial narrowing of the spinal canal and pain," said Dr. Jagannathan. "Conditions such as these are common in my practice. I see some cases which are simpler than this, and some which are more complex."

## USING THE LATEST TECHNIQUES

If a patient requires surgery, like Sindy, the physicians will use the most advanced approaches and take advantage of leading endoscopic, laser-assisted and microscopic techniques. The clinics emphasize patient safety and comfort while using approaches that provide the quickest recovery and return to normal activities.

"My day of surgery went better than I ever expected," Sindy said. "I arrived first thing in the morning and was greeted by a team of caregivers that made me feel very comfortable and at ease. When I woke up from surgery I was pain free for the first time in many months. I wanted to go home shortly after my surgery and the nurses and physical therapists were very helpful in assisting me in that goal."



◀ Dr. Jay Jagannathan performs open and minimally invasive procedures related to complex spine, spinal oncology and deformity.

## ABOUT THE WBRMC NEUROSURGERY CLINICS

Eighty percent of people suffer from back pain at some point in their lives. WBRMC's neurosurgery clinics allow for many common back issues to be resolved quickly and safely.

"The medical engineering built around these clinics ensures that the same equipment that is used at the most advanced spine centers in the United States can now be found much closer to home," said Ethan Lipkind, chief executive officer for MRHP. "WBRMC is one of the only hospitals in Northeast Michigan to offer this specific neurosurgery program, which includes minimally invasive spinal reconstruction and instrumentation and pain management.



MRHP is a non-profit organization that recognizes the need to maintain and preserve rural hospitals and other healthcare providers in Michigan. It is an innovative healthcare operator which helps reverse the flow of patients out of rural hospitals. Instead, by providing exceptional services locally, patients can be treated closer to home. It accomplishes this by managing surgical services and recruiting the most high profile specialists in the state to bring extremely innovative surgical techniques to local hospitals.

"I hope to bring access to quality neurosurgical and spine care for the West Branch community," said Dr. Jagannathan. "Between our offices in West Branch and Southeast Michigan, we are capable of treating the spectrum of neurosurgical diseases. Our goal is to provide excellent service to the community and being accessible to all of our patients while eliminating long waits for consultation and treatment."

To schedule an appointment in the West Branch Clinic patients can call the following: Dr. Jagannathan: (855) 296-3292; Dr. Schell (989) 799-8712; Dr. Lawson (906) 253-1300; and Dr. Adams (989) 753-4000. ♦

Sindy Fuller shown above.

Have You Heard the "Medical Minute?"

Every weekday on WBML and every Monday on WUPS you can learn more about what the John Tolfree Health System has to offer our surrounding communities.

The "Medical Minute" is sponsored by West Branch Regional Medical Center and Supported by the John Tolfree Health System, consisting of West Branch Regional Medical Center, Hospice of Helping Hands and the Tolfree Foundation. The Health System is dedicated to compassion, excellence and our surrounding communities. ♦