

John Muir Health Surgeon Performs First Awake Intradiscal Lumbar Interbody Fusion Surgery Using Globus ExcelsiusGPS®

Procedure allows patient to go home the same day and speeds recovery.

WALNUT CREEK, CA, UNITED STATES, May 23, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dr.

Terence Chen, a neuro and spine surgeon at [John Muir Health](#), recently performed the first awake spine surgery at the health system's Walnut Creek Medical Center. The procedure to fuse the patient's L4 and L5 vertebrae was done using the Globus ExcelsiusGPS® robotic spine surgery system.



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Dr. Terence Chen, a neuro and spine surgeon at John Muir Health

The patient, Roberto Lonardo, suffered from back issues in recent years caused by degenerative discs. He had a successful previous spine surgery performed by Dr. Chen in 1995. When he learned that he was a good candidate for awake spine surgery to address his current problems, he enthusiastically selected that option.

The surgery involves using spinal anesthesia for selected operations, such as the Intradiscal Lumbar Interbody Fusion (IntraLIF), a "next generation" minimally invasive procedure performed on Mr. Lonardo. Dr. Chen used the Globus ExcelsiusGPS® robot to plan and place the required screws for the surgery before implanting the RISE® IntraLif®

device in the disc space to complete the spinal fusion.

Using advanced 3D imaging and robotics reduces the patient's surgical time and the patient benefits from having a shorter-acting spinal anesthesia. Compared to traditional procedures, minimally invasive approaches using 3D imaging and robotics can also reduce the extent of surgical openings, tissue trauma, and radiation exposure.

“The surgery was very successful, and Mr. Lonardo was able to go home on the same day,” said Dr. Chen. “Not having to undergo general anesthesia allows for quicker recovery. We do surgery

in the morning, send the patient to recovery, then conduct two afternoon physical therapy sessions to make sure they can be safely discharged.”

“Being awake gave me more peace of mind,” said Lonardo. “I felt a lot better following the procedure than I ever have with general anesthesia. It was a night and day difference. I was able to get up and move around quickly and I didn’t feel groggy.”

Mr. Lonardo started his physical therapy at the medical center two hours after leaving the operating room. At home, he used acetaminophen to control his pain and appreciated that he avoided a long hospital stay. “I feel great and am not having any pain,” he said.

“There are many patient benefits to awake spine surgery, including the recovery time, managing the use of narcotics for the surgery and pain, and being able to recover at home,” said Dr. Chen. “We want to make awake spine surgery a standard for eligible patients at John Muir Health.”

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About John Muir Health

John Muir Health is a nationally recognized, not-for-profit health care organization east of San Francisco serving patients in Contra Costa, Alameda and southern Solano Counties. It includes a network of more than 1,000 primary care and specialty physicians, 6,300 employees, medical centers in Concord and Walnut Creek, including Contra Costa County’s only trauma center, and a Behavioral Health Center. John Muir Health also has partnerships with UCSF Health, Tenet Healthcare/San Ramon Regional Medical Center, Stanford Medicine Children’s Health, Optum and Carbon Health. The health system offers a full-range of medical services, including primary care, outpatient and imaging services, and is widely recognized as a leader in many specialties – neurosciences, orthopedic, cancer, cardiovascular, trauma, emergency, pediatrics and high-risk obstetrics care.

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