

MEDICAL NEWS

I Do Not Want to Lose Any More of My Life to Chronic Headaches... I Just Realized How Much of My Life Was Lost to Migraines

Contributed to by Dana Elborno and Actual Patients

The Migraine Research Foundation reports that every 10 seconds, someone in the United States goes to the emergency room with a headache or Migraine. The Foundation adds that this condition ranks in the top 20 of the most disabling illnesses, affecting 10-percent of the population and nearly one in four families.

Most migraine sufferers experience headaches once or twice a month, while others - nearly 4-percent - experience headaches nearly everyday. Approximately 18-percent of American women and 6-percent men suffer from migraine, and American employers lose more than \$13 billion dollars each year as a result of 113-million days lost from work. These statistics suggest how devastating this condition can be on work, family life, parenthood, and more. But there are patients who find relief.

"You can't explain a migraine to a toddler," says Jeanna, a stay-at-home mom, who used to have her hands full trying to keep up with three children while coping with at least two migraines per month. She used to hesitate taking medicine because of their endless side effects. Her kids need her, so she can't afford to be totally wiped out by her migraine or her medication. Jeanna found significant relief with Nerve blocks and Botox injection after she started going to see Dr. N. Suwan, a board-certified neurologist and a specialist in Pain Medicine, who operates the Advanced Pain & Spine Physician Center and Advanced Headache Clinic & Dignostics in suburban Lisle.

"I just realized how much of my life was lost to migraines," Jeanna said.

"I do not want to lose any more of my life to chronic headaches". She is looking forward to a wonderful future taking care of her kids and going back to school at the same time to do her MBA. And there are other success stories.

Kelly Gilbert, 32, works in Schaumburg as a hairdresser. She's also a mother of a seven-year-old son, and she wants to remain active and keep up with her high energy child.

For a long time, chronic migraine headaches made making work and motherhood far more difficult than they ought to be.

"I've had migraines for about 12 to 14 years, and usually would get them a couple of times a week," Gilbert said. "It got to be that for me, a good day was one where I didn't throw up. I usually had to leave work once or twice every couple of months, and I was often sick on my days off, which meant I got no relief from work when I wasn't there."

Gilbert did not try to fight her battle alone. Initially, she sought out an ear, nose, and throat specialist in an effort to fight her pain. She then moved on to a Chicago-based doctor who specialized in headache treatment and spent ten years taking various medications which never resolved any of her issues.

"I took a variety of prescriptions which I eventually built up a tolerance to and they did not work," Gilbert said. "I was also giving myself injections. I got a lot of 'rebound' headaches too. Basically, I just tried to tough things out as best I could."

A little over three months ago, a friend of Gilbert's living in Glen Ellyn offered her an article featuring a story about Dr. Suwan. Despite the fact that she lives in Cary, Illinois, Gilbert called the clinic and made an appointment. That was the day her life began to change.



Kelly Gilbert with Her Son Quintin Enjoying a Better Quality of Life

"I went in to see Dr. Suwan, and during the first visit, she asked me a million questions about my pain. We talked about the intensity, where it hurt, how frequently, and we talked about what she might do in order to take care of it," Gilbert said. "From there, we went on to taking medications and I also received an injection that same day. The results since then have been almost too good to believe."

Gilbert said the number of headaches she experiences has dropped by 75-percent, and that the headaches she does experience are much less severe.

"Because I have lived with this sort of thing for so long, I'm almost skeptical about the results," she said. "It's almost like something that's too good to be true. I don't have the vomiting any more, and the number of headaches I do get has decreased."

Gilbert said she continues to take daily medication which she hopes will decrease over time. To date, she has seen Suwan three other times, where she has continued to receive injections that continue to make each day in her life something to welcome rather than fear. "My quality of life has improved immensely as well as my outlook," Gilbert said. "My son can play with his mother now, and I can do things like other people who don't have headaches. It's ok to go out to dinner and have a drink with my meal and not worry I'll be in pain the next day from having one drink. I can workout at the gym and not have to cancel appointments for my clients."

Gilbert endorses the care she has received from Dr. Suwan and is already making referrals on her own.

"I already gave Dr. Suwan's card to someone just the other day," she said. "I'm so grateful and hope this relief continues."

"Migraine is a common often debilitating medical condition that may affect people at the years of their maximum productivity. It has been under diagnosed and under treated by both patients and physicians", said Dr Suwan.

Migraine may start as an episodic condition, when left untreated it may increase in frequency and intensity and may become a constant daily occurrence that would prevent its sufferers from performing the simplest daily activities.

Like any chronic pain condition, when untreated, the nervous system would change rendering the body more susceptible to other chronic pain conditions. It's not unusual to see patients suffering from chronic headaches and fibromyalgia at the same time, or chronic headaches and irritable bowel syndrome.

"Treating chronic daily headache and chronic pain condition is an art. There are many treatment modalities and there is no single fit." Dr suwan said.

With the latest in medical science there is no reason to lose more of your life to chronic headaches and pain.

You can visit Dr. Suwan at the following sites

- Controlyourpainchicago.com
- Elbornoonline.com

Central Scheduling – (630) 245-1010

