

SAN ANTONIO

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Neurosurgery and
Spine Consultants:
A Community
Resource
for Excellent
Neurosurgical Care

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AT NEUROSURGERY AND SPINE CONSULTANTS (NSC) IN SAN ANTONIO, TX, PATIENTS BENEFIT FROM STATE-OF-THE-ART CARE DELIVERED IN A PERSONALIZED, COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT.

STAFFED BY THREE experienced neurosurgeons, NSC was founded by a father-son team — Gerardo Zavala Sr., M.D., neurosurgeon, and Gerardo Zavala II, M.D., neurosurgeon. Together, they strive to provide patients with exceptional, compassionate care while offering a wide array of services, including comprehensive general neurosurgery, cranial intervention, and minimally invasive and complex spinal deformity surgery. They are proud to continue to grow their practice through the addition of a third physician, Ladislau Albert Jr., M.D., neurosurgeon.

A Family Affair

Dr. Zavala II sought to follow in his father's footsteps, choosing neurosurgery because of the profound improvement it made in the quality of the patients' lives and because of the complex science involved.

"My father was very passionate about neurosurgery and takes great ownership in his ability to help others," says Dr. Zavala II. "Growing up, I watched him care for patients who experienced significant hardships, but had vast improvements following their surgeries. This left a lasting imprint on me, and I also wanted to be able to make

this difference in the lives of patients."

During his medical school rotations, Dr. Zavala II's interest in neurosurgery grew, as the field provided him with an opportunity to incorporate several different specialties.

"Neurosurgery encompassed everything I wanted out of my medical career," says Dr. Zavala II. "There was an emergency medicine component, an elective surgical component and a complex medical management component, which involves providing medical treatment from ICU critical care up to coordinating rehabilitative medicine. To be a good neurosurgeon, you really need to be



familiar with multiple specialties. Often, the different disciplines of surgery, neurology, internal medicine and physical medicine are evaluated in one patient.”

NSC’s newest physician, Dr. Albert, also has had a lifelong interest in medicine.

“I became interested in medicine in grammar school, so becoming a doctor was a longtime goal of mine,” says Dr. Albert. “When I was in high school, I had the opportunity to participate in a volunteer internship, and an alumnus of our school was a neurosurgeon. Over a period of three months, I spent time with him both in the office and in the operating room, and I decided then and there that was what I wanted to do.”

Originally from Romania, Dr. Albert came to the United States when he was a young child. His wife is from San Antonio, so relocating to join the staff at NSC provides an opportunity to be near her family.

“Joining Neurosurgery and Spine Consultants is a great opportunity because it offers me the ability to work with great, experienced physicians while living close to family,” says Dr. Albert.

The Evolution of Neurosurgery

Throughout the years, neurosurgery has advanced tremendously, and Dr. Zavala Sr. has kept abreast of the latest techniques and technologies.

“Over the past 30 years, neurosurgery has changed dramatically, with most of the advances occurring in the last 10 years,” says Dr. Zavala Sr. “Now, we have the advantage of utilizing state-of-the-art techniques that allow surgeries to be performed in a minimally invasive fashion. MRIs, angiograms and other forms of guided imagery can also be used in the operating room during surgery to provide enhanced monitoring for patients undergoing brain or spinal cord procedures. There is no doubt in my mind that neurosurgery has changed for the better over the last 30 years.”

NSC’s proficiency in advanced technology has benefited its patients in a variety of ways — including the utilization of GPS technology to better localize brain tumors so that large incisions are a thing of the

INTRODUCING THE TREATMENT TEAM



Gerardo Zavala Sr., M.D.



Gerardo Zavala II, M.D.



Ladislau Albert Jr., M.D.

AT NEUROSURGERY AND Spine Consultants, patients have access to three experienced neurosurgeons — Gerardo Zavala Sr., M.D.; Gerardo Zavala II, M.D.; and Ladislau Albert Jr., M.D.

Originally from Mexico, Dr. Zavala Sr. received his medical degree from the Universidad de Nuevo Leon. Following completion of his medical degree, he trained in emergency medicine before coming to the United States, where he completed a one-year surgical internship at The University of Chicago and received training in neurosurgery under the guidance of Oscar Sugar, M.D., Ph.D., neurosurgeon at the University of Illinois. Dr. Zavala Sr. has been practicing medicine in San Antonio for the past 31 years.

A San Antonio native, Dr. Zavala II followed in his father’s footsteps, completing his medical degree at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. He is fellowship trained in complex spine surgery and received his fellowship training at Loyola University Chicago. Dr. Zavala II recently served as director of the neurosurgery and the stroke programs at Metropolitan Methodist Hospital and currently holds the position of Director of Neurosurgery at Southwest General Hospital. Dr. Zavala has also previously worked as an associate professor of neurosurgery at the University of Texas Health Science Center and is on the Physician Leadership Committee at St. Luke’s Baptist Hospital.

Dr. Albert is originally from Romania and became interested in medicine at a young age. He completed his medical degree at SUNY Downstate College of Medicine in Brooklyn, NY. He recently finished his residency and fellowship training in complex spine surgery at the New York Medical College, which is affiliated with Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, NY.

Neurosurgery and Spine Consultants will be holding an open house for physicians at their medical center location on Thursday, October 20, 2011, from 4 to 8 p.m. The clinic is located at 4423 NW Loop 410 in San Antonio, TX, on the access road between Babcock Road and Callaghan Road.

past. This technique has also been implemented with the placement of spinal instrumentation in complex spinal deformities such as scoliosis. As a certified instructor, Dr. Zavala II recently taught a course in minimally invasive spine techniques to a group of 50 international spine surgeons.

“Patients are happier with this approach because of quicker mobility after surgery,” says Dr. Zavala II. “We can make an incision smaller than the diameter of a dime, which decreases infection rates and allows the majority of patients to go home the same day of surgery.”

All-Inclusive Neurosurgical Care

At NSC, patients benefit from a full range of neurosurgical services. Dr. Zavala Sr. provides general neurosurgery, as well as interventional procedures such as injections, while Dr. Zavala II and Dr. Albert provide surgical care for conditions of the spine, brain and peripheral nerves. Because both Dr. Zavala II and Dr. Albert completed dedicated spine fellowships, their comfort levels with spinal surgery allow them to approach everything from degenerative spinal conditions to complex spinal deformities like scoliosis.

Two locations are available through NSC, allowing patients to receive the care they need in an environment close to home. As the staff of physicians con-

tinues to grow, NSC will be able to expand its practice reach to serve more areas of San Antonio that are currently underserved in terms of neurosurgical services. The addition of Dr. Albert to the medical staff will benefit patients by decreasing wait times, as well as enhancing access to care.

A Personalized Approach to Neurosurgery

Physicians at NSC focus on providing individualized care to patients. Each physician personally reviews the radiographic images with the patient and explains the diagnosis in terms he or she can understand. Patient consultation rooms are equipped with large, high-definition screens and laptop computers, so physicians and patients can review the data together. In addition, each room is spacious enough so all family members can be present to partake in their loved one’s medical discussion.

“I was raised in San Antonio, and I attended medical school here. This is my home. I am invested in improving and providing quality medical care to the community and people of San Antonio,” says Dr. Zavala II. “My father has instilled in me a sense of community and a dedication to treating the person — not the X-ray. I believe it is nurturing the human aspect of medicine and providing emotional support that gets patients through difficult

situations, and there is often pain and anxiety associated with any surgery — especially with neurosurgery.

Looking to the Future

As NSC continues to grow, the team hopes to incorporate on-site digital X-rays, a dedicated specialized procedure room for vertebroplasties and interventional injections, as well as physical therapy. Emphasis is placed on developing a network of like-minded physicians specializing in neurology, pain management, physical medicine and rehabilitation to provide the best quality of care to the patient.

“We are a group of neurosurgeons who are establishing a presence in our community,” says Dr. Zavala Sr. “We have tried to develop an effective system of delivering neurosurgical care, and the plan for the future is to be able to do everything in a state-of-the-art facility, including diagnostic imaging and simple procedures on an outpatient basis.”

Including Referring Physicians in the Treatment Plan

“It is important to remember that the referring and/or primary care physician is an integral member in the patient’s treatment plan,” says Dr. Zavala II. “When a patient is referred to my office, my staff and I make every effort to see each patient in a timely manner. Once evaluated, the patient’s clinic visit is documented by electronic medical records, and a copy is sent to the referring specialist and the primary care physician. Communication is the key in solving the patient’s problems. It is only when the referring physician and specialist align that a solution can address the patient’s needs.”

The treatment team at NSC considers communication with referring providers a key component of achieving optimal outcomes, and physicians strive to keep providers abreast of the treatment plan and any progress or changes in a patient’s condition that occur following treatment.

For more information about the services provided through Neurosurgery and Spine Consultants, please call (210) 255-8935 or visit www.neuroandspineconsultants.com. ■

