





I WAS FEARLESS BECAUSE I HAD NOTHING TO LOSE AND EVERYTHING TO GAIN.

Gale Lane did not want to live in pain anymore. She needed to be active for her job in juvenile corrections and she wanted to do the things she loved, like golf.

Dr. Wenner, surgeon at Klamath Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Clinic, told Gale something needed to be done to improve her quality of life.

"I needed to trust my doctor. I am knowledgeable about a lot of things, but when it comes to back repair, he's the expert. So I listened," said Gale.

Gale's surgery was successful. Both Dr. Wenner and Gale attribute much of her success to what she did after her surgery.

"I walked right away. And it hurt. But it hurt less than before I had the surgery," Gale said. She recounts how Dr. Wenner said the pain was normal after a major surgery and gave her guidelines for how to slowly become active again.

Gale used the techniques she was taught in the hospital. She used her reacher, understood a walker was necessary for her for a short time and made sure to use the body mechanics necessary to protect her surgical repair.

"You can't give in to the pain. You have to understand going into the surgery that a certain amount of pain is normal. And it will get better. I am certain that staying active sped up my recovery," she said.

Gale was smart about building back up her activity level. She was in the gym walking on the treadmill within a month. She then increased to light weights that did not put pressure on her back. Eventually, eight months after her surgery, she shot a 44 on the golf course.

"If I had it to do all over again, I would. I was encouraged by community members to research bigger hospitals to have my surgery at and I could never understand why. As far as I'm concerned, you don't get any better than what we have in orthopedic care here in Klamath Falls," Gale said.

She emphasized how her surgeons listened to her, talked *to* her rather than *at* her and she had every confidence in them.

She showed off her range of motion. She twisted, turned and touched the ground with her fingers. Then she straightened back up, smiled and said, "I can do anything now."

AFTER MY SURGERY I REALIZED WHAT I WAS MISSING OUT ON BY NOT HAVING FULL RANGE OF MOTION IN MY NECK.

Holly Sharp, a native of Klamath Falls, has always been an active adult. Although she was exercising through the pain, she was unable to move her neck well.

Nerve pain began to pulse down Holly's arm and she started to lose her ability to grip everyday items. For someone who attends CrossFit multiple times a week and is at the gym no less than five days per week, something needed to change.

Dr. Conaughty, neck and back surgeon at Klamath Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Clinic, told her that she needed a fusion of her C6 and C7 vertebra.

She remembers feeling nervous and thinking that the surgery was extreme for someone her age, but when the doctor tells you to do something, you do it.

Holly said, "I'm an avid runner and I was trying to think of the worst-case scenarios. I was afraid I wouldn't be able to run anymore. I wanted to get one last good run in, so on the day of my surgery,

I put on my shoes and ran to the hospital."

The surgery went well and Holly shares that she feels 150 percent better than she did before. She didn't realize what she was missing out on by not having full range of motion in her neck. She did not even realize she could no longer move her head all the way from one side to the other or tilt her head to look up.

Holly recommends that patients take good care of themselves prior to surgery so they will have a better experience during recovery.

"Within a month, I felt like I was back in the swing of things," Holly shares, "but I had to keep reminding myself about my surgeon's warnings to take things slow in the beginning."

Holly is back in the gym, doing all the activities she wants and is lifting more weight than ever before.

"Explore the options at Sky Lakes," she says, "I can't even imagine my body going back to the way it was before surgery."

