

SpineNevada's triage protocol speeds patient to relief

As a regional referral center for back and neck pain, SpineNevada sees thousands of back and neck pain sufferers annually. In our efforts to shorten the delay to see our spine physicians, and to ensure that patients see the best physician for their particular spine problem, here is an overview of how we triage and schedule patients. By having a written triage protocol for schedulers, and referral sources, we hope to express lane all those patients needing quick access to the spine surgeon for complex or emergent spine problems. This triage process also enables all patients to get faster access to our spine center for diagnostics, pain relieving injections or spine specialized therapy.

Depending upon patient severity and symptoms, patients can benefit from a visit with our physical medicine physicians to exhaust nonsurgical treatment options. However, if a physician referral is made for a specific physician, we will ensure that the patient sees your choice of a specific physician.

The overall intent of our triage protocol is to help the patient exhaust nonsurgical options first before surgery, which could include spine specialized physical therapy and injections. PMR doctors also have a strong understanding of posture and gait and how this may affect back and neck strain. At SpineNevada, Dr. Jonathan Burns and Dr. Lisa Pitino are spine specialized physiatrists and fellowship-trained in Interventional Pain Management. Dr. Burns and Dr. Pitino

can provide the necessary work up, order the necessary diagnostics and provide injection therapy to reduce inflammation around nerve roots, which can eliminate the need for spine surgery.

Conversely, those patients who present with red flag symptoms, like weakness or numbness in a leg or arm, or loss of control of bowel/bladder, will be triaged immediately to a spine surgeon. If your patient has already exhausted nonsurgical options elsewhere, please note that to the scheduler so they can be triaged directly to our board-certified neurological and fellowship-trained surgeon, Dr. James Lynch.



Important reminder: If your patient has already exhausted nonsurgical options elsewhere, please note that to the scheduler so they can be triaged directly to one of our spine specialized surgeons.

Appointment triage for back & neck pain

OVERVIEW OF SPINE CENTER INTAKE PROTOCOL:
 Patients typically receive 6 weeks of non-surgical treatment options before spine surgery, absent red flag symptoms, e.g., cauda equina, trauma or progressive neurological deficit.

INITIAL TRIAGE INTO SPINE CENTER

Any red flag symptoms?

NO YES

Is there PAIN RADIATING below knee or elbow?

NO YES

APPT with PMR PHYSICIAN for diagnostics, injections, therapy PRN

APPT within week with SURGEON OR PMR PHYSICIAN

CAUDA EQUINA ?
 Loss of bowel or bladder control?
SAME DAY APPT WITH SPINE SURGEON or send to EMERGENCY ROOM

NEUROLOGICAL DEFICIT ?
 Progressive weakness, numbness in leg or arm
APPT within 48 hours with SPINE SURGEON

TRAUMA ?
 Suspected trauma: (Fall, Car Accident)
 Rule out fracture or other emergent issues.
APPT within week with PMR PHYSICIAN OR SPINE SURGEON

NON-MECHANICAL LBP ?
 Cancer, Tumor, Infection, Non-mechanical back or neck pain
APPT within week with PMR PHYSICIAN OR SPINE SURGEON

Fellowship-trained spine surgeon, physiatrists, physician assistants and spine therapists — all under one roof

James J. Lynch, M.D., FACS, FRCSI

Board-certified Neurosurgeon

Fellowship-Trained Spine Surgeon

Dr. James Lynch is a board-certified neurological surgeon who specializes in complex spine surgery, cervical disorders, degenerative spine, spinal deformities, trauma, tumor infection and minimally invasive spine surgery. He has been elected to "Best Doctors of America" and received the "Top Neurosurgeons in US" award by consumer report. Dr. Lynch has been selected for Becker's Orthopedic & Spine Review's list of "50 of the Best Spine Specialists in America". Dr. Lynch is one of a handful of spine surgeons with three fellowships in the specialty of spine surgery. He has also served as Chief of Neurosurgery at St. Mary's Hospital. Dr. Lynch has been published in leading journals including: Spine: Journal of Neurosurgery and Neurosurgery.

He earned his medical degree from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, followed by a residency at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. Dr. Lynch went on to complete a spine fellowship at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in Queens Square, London, UK, followed by a spine fellowship at Mayo Clinic and an additional spine fellowship under Volker Sonntag, MD, at the prestigious Barrow Neurological Institute in Phoenix, AZ. As a leading authority on Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC) development, Dr. Lynch lectures at national meetings on outpatient spine surgery. He serves as Chairman and Director of Spine Programs at Surgery Center of Reno. Dr. Lynch is the founder of SpineNevada.



Jonathan D. Burns, M.D.

Board-certified Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

Fellowship-Trained Pain Management Specialist

Dr. Burns joins SpineNevada after completing an interventional Spine and Musculoskeletal Medicine Fellowship at The SMART Clinic in Sandy, Utah. Dr. Burns specializes in the assessment, diagnosis and non-surgical treatment of back and neck pain problems. He is proficient in EMGs and pain-relieving spinal injections.



He completed a residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia, where he also served as clinical instructor, elective coordinator and research coordinator. He is a member of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and the Physiatric Association of Spine, Sports & Occupational Rehabilitation.

Lisa M. Pitino, D.O.

Board-certified Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

Fellowship-Trained Pain Management Specialist

Dr. Pitino joins SpineNevada after completing a Pain Management Fellowship at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. Dr. Pitino specializes in the assessment, diagnosis and non-surgical treatment of back and neck pain problems. She is proficient in EMGs and pain-relieving spinal injections.



She completed a residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. She is a member of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and the Physiatric Association of Spine, Sports & Occupational Rehabilitation.

Joseph L. Olivarez, P.A.-C

Physician Assistant

Joseph Olivarez has been with SpineNevada since September of 2004. He received his certificate in PA studies in 1995 from the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific, in Pomona, CA. Since becoming a PA, Mr. Olivarez has worked with both orthopedic and neurosurgical spine surgeons. He has assisted on thousands of spine surgeries in his 13 year career. Joseph has remained active in the education of physician assistants. He is on the adjunct faculty at Western University. He is a clinical preceptor for Western University, Samuel Merritt College Physician Assistant Program, and Touro University Primary Care Physician Assistant Program. Mr. Olivarez has received special recognition for achievements and knowledge of surgery and is certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. He is also a Fellow member of the Association of Neurosurgical Physician Assistants and the Nevada Academy of Physician Assistants.



Josh Pfeifle, P.A.-C

Physician Assistant

Josh Pfeifle, P.A.-C, joined SpineNevada in 2007. Josh also works alongside SpineNevada physicians and surgeons, assisting in all areas of patient care and management, including office visits, in-patient care and assisting in surgery. During his training he completed an elective neurosurgery internship in Great Falls, MT. He is a 2006 graduate of the Rocky Mountain College Physician Assistant Program, in Billings, Montana, where he earned a Masters of Physician Assistant Studies. Josh is certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. Josh comes to SpineNevada from the rural farming community of Power, Montana.



To refer a patient to SpineNevada for non-surgical treatment, 2nd opinion, surgical consult, spinal injections, EMGs or spine-specialized therapy, call us at 775.348.8800.

SpineNevada Locations

Reno Main Clinic

75 Pringle Way
Suite 502 & 605
Reno, NV 89502



Sparks Clinic

2385 E. Prater Way
Suite 204
Sparks, NV 89434



Phone: 775.348.8800

Fax: 775.348.8818

Online spine encyclopedia at SpineNevada.com

Home Remedy Book

SpineNevada wants the patient to be well-informed about the causes of back and neck pain. Once an individual encounters back or neck pain, he or she is four times as likely to experience it again. This is why prevention is essential to long-term recovery. As a community service, we mail out a free, 36-page Home Remedy Book that has helped thousands of people with symptom relief. Contact us at 775.348.8800 and we will send you a copy.

