

Patience Pays Off For Patient Recovering From Separated Shoulder

Anita Garza Celebrates Birthday Pain Free
Thanks To Team From Non-Surgical Center of Texas

San Antonio, Texas – Anita Garza was performing a fairly routine chore – cleaning her large garden tub – when her hand slipped as she tried to lift herself off her knees. She went tumbling forward, her right shoulder slamming square onto an edge of unforgiving marble.

The pain sent her reeling backwards onto the floor. In pain and slightly embarrassed even though no one witnessed the accident, Garza examined her injury. She noticed bruising and some swelling on the shoulder, but since she could still move her arm, she figured the shoulder would heal on its own.

It didn't. The pain worsened. Garza, an office manager for an engineering firm, couldn't perform simple functions like opening a drawer without feeling severe discomfort. She tried to stop using her right arm to rest it in the hopes it would get better, but that just led to muscle atrophy. "People would look at me and tell me, 'Do you realize your right arm is hanging lower than your left arm?'" she recalled.

Garza tried to treat it with simple over-the-counter pain medication, but when she was up to 10 pills a day, she realized she needed professional help. She knew many people who worked in the medical field, and most told her she probably would need surgery to repair her damaged shoulder.

Then, Garza ran into Dr. Annette Zaharoff, who had treated her for a knee injury many years earlier that did not require surgery. Garza soon made an appointment to see her.

Dr. Zaharoff's practice is The Non-Surgical Center of Texas, which specializes in non-surgical treatment of physical injuries and pain. This runs the gambit from muscle, nerve and joint injuries to chronic and recurrent injuries. She is among a handful of **physiatrists** in the nation, medical doctors who specialize in physical rehabilitation and treatment of the whole patient, not just the problem area ... without surgery.

"The thing about Dr. Zaharoff is that she tries the least invasive procedures to correct the problem. She tells you straight up if she thinks it might require more than what she has to offer," Garza said. "It's hugely important to have a health professional who will tell you the odds of

being able to have something corrected this way, or if you will need surgery.”

Dr. Zaharoff performed a diagnostic sonogram and X-ray on Garza’s shoulder and soon diagnosed her with a torn rotator cuff and separated AC joint. “She told me there was no guarantee I wouldn’t need cortisone shots or surgery, but that she wanted to try treating it first without them.”

So Garza began a regular routine of physical therapy. It started with simple stretching exercises to try to get some range of motion back into the right arm. Gradually, weight exercises were added to Garza’s routine. Dr. Zaharoff also used deep heat ultrasound treatments to promote healing.

The physical therapist worked with Garza and gave her a chart with instructions on which exercises to do at home. Garza faithfully followed the orders to work on her own in addition to coming to the center for check-ups.

After about three months, Garza noticed considerable improvement, but there was still some pain isolated in one part of her shoulder. “We talked then about doing cortisone injections, but Dr. Zaharoff also said it might just take a little more time with physical therapy to heal,” Garza said. “I decided to give it a bit longer.”

“Then one day, I woke up and my shoulder didn’t hurt anymore.”

Anita Garza turned 58 on New Year’s Day 2011, and she celebrated it pain free thanks to the team from the Non-Surgical Center of Texas.

Garza said she was especially impressed with the staff and the way they communicated with each other and with her. “Regardless of which physical therapist I saw, I knew they were going to know my case just as well as the last person who saw me,” Garza said. “You’re not just another number. They go over their patient’s records carefully and review your case with you so you know what to expect. That’s really a key communication piece that doesn’t happen in most places.”

“I could be a walking billboard for Dr. Zaharoff,” Garza said. “I have been nothing but thrilled that I can now lift and have full range of motion – without surgery. I could not be more pleased.”

Although serious athletes are a natural audience for Dr. Zaharoff – who was once a professional tennis player who toured the globe – she also treats musicians, weekend warriors, Baby Boomers striving to manage chronic joint pain or anyone who needs relief from physical pain or injury.

For more information, call The Non-Surgical Center of Texas at 210.616.0646. Or visit them on the web at www.DrZMD.com.

###