

HealthyConnections

BRAIN AND SPINE CARE SERVICES



Unforgettable care
for healthy brains and backs

January 2020

It was July 3rd, and Kolette DeBartelo of Trevor was enjoying some time away from work.

"I hadn't been off on the Fourth of July in years," Kolette recalled. "I was doing some gardening work -- what I love to do. I sat down at a patio table and my daughter said, 'Mom, your right pupil is really huge,' so I went in the house. The pupil covered my entire eye. I knew that wasn't right."

Kolette - an obstetrics nurse who has helped deliver babies at Froedtert Pleasant Prairie Hospital for 27 years - went straight to the people she knew and trusted to take care of her: the hospital's emergency department providers and staff.

"At the emergency department front desk," Kolette said, "I told them, 'If you can see my eye...' That was it. They called a stroke alert and staff responded very quickly."

"It was just like a well-oiled machine," Kolette remembered, "one thing right after another, just like it would be if there were an emergency in my OB/GYN department. They went from one test to another: a CT Scan, IVs, blood work, all of that. Everything happened so fast."



Kolette DeBartelo



Dr. Arvind Ahuja

FINDING THE CAUSE

The tests quickly uncovered the cause. "It was an aneurysm that was pushing on one of the nerves behind my right eye," Kolette learned.

That's when Kolette met Dr. Arvind Ahuja, a neurosurgeon and spine care specialist on the Froedtert South Medical Staff. "Dr. Ahuja spoke to me almost like I was a family member," Kolette said. "He talked to me about my plan of care. I put my trust in him to fix the problem. I felt excellent about that. I had no doubts. And today I'm feeling great."

Dr. Ahuja worked with Kolette to choose the right treatment for her. "When it comes to treating an aneurysm," Dr. Ahuja said, "I'm not going to sell you a Ford because that's the only car on the lot. There are lots of options for caring for aneurysms and I've taken the time to learn how to do all of them."

STORY CONTINUES →

FIXING THE PROBLEM

Dr. Ahuja surgically repaired Kolette's aneurysm the following day. "We have everything we need here at Froedtert Pleasant Prairie Hospital to diagnose and treat these health issues locally," Dr. Ahuja said, "and provide patients the same care and outcomes they would get at a major hospital or a university hospital without being so far away from home. It's such an advantage for the community."



Navdeep Walia

THE BEST

"I'll never forget Dr. Ahuja for the rest of my life," is how Navdeep Walia, of Kenosha, described the treatment for severe back pain that he received from Dr. Ahuja.

"I couldn't stand, walk, sit, or sleep," Navdeep recalled. "I was basically paralyzed. I couldn't do anything. And I was taking as much pain medication as possible."

Navdeep was referred to Dr. Ahuja by a pain management specialist, "who told me Dr. Ahuja is the best," Navdeep said. "Dr. Ahuja saw me the next day. His office called me right back."

After tests revealed damaged discs were causing Navdeep's pain, Dr. Ahuja performed back and spine surgery to repair them. Physical therapy began while Navdeep was still hospitalized. "They wanted to get me up and see how far I could walk," Navdeep remembered. "I stood up on my own. They asked if I needed a wheelchair, and I said, 'No, I can walk.' I walked almost a mile the second day after my surgery."

LIKE I'M YOUNG AGAIN

Released the following day, Navdeep had expected four to six weeks of recovery at home. But just three days after surgery, Navdeep said, "I woke up and showered, got dressed, put on the brace they gave me, called my office to have a driver pick me up, and I went back to work."

"I've been working full time ever since," Navdeep said. "Now I walk a mile and exercise every day. I feel like I'm a new person. There's no pain, no hunching over, nothing. It makes me feel like I'm young again."

"I love seeing patients," Dr. Ahuja said. "It gives me a purpose: for each one of my patients - those who need surgery and those who just need treatment - to provide them the best possible outcomes."

"He takes pride in what he does," Navdeep Walia said. "He treats all his patients with a lot of love and dignity. When he comes and talks to you he holds your hand. It's a very personal feeling. I tell people they can close their eyes and trust Dr. Ahuja to take care of them."

STILL BY MY SIDE

"Dr. Ahuja and his team are still by my side to this day," Kolette DeBartelo said. "Any time I need to be seen, I can call and their care is always there. I don't even have to ask questions. They give me answers to questions I don't even know how to ask."

OUTSTANDING CARE CLOSE TO HOME

"This isn't a situation where you can only get that level of care if you go to a huge hospital in a major city," Dr. Ahuja said. "We've worked hard to build a team to provide patients the best care possible - from staff, to nurses, to other physicians and specialists in our hospitals."

"People in this area are sophisticated, and want the best care available," Dr. Ahuja said. "We have the technology and the best staff right here in Kenosha County, close to home. And you're not going to have to wait a long time. We'll see you today."

