Radames Hernandez Martinez

Date of Crash: August 24, 2021, at 0740

Date of Birth: February 25, 1989 (age 32 years at the time of crash)

Cervical and lumbar disk pathology

*Post-crash medical history*

Mr. Hernandez had both hands on the steering wheel; he was aware of an impending crash but unable to brace. The collision shook him up, but Mr. Hernandez was not aware of immediate pain or injury. Over the next few days, however, he developed pain in his left shoulder and lower back with pain radiating down his left leg.

On September 1, 2021, 7 days after the crash, Mr. Hernandez presented to Cynthia Mirand PA to Dr. Glenn Flanagan (interventional pain management) with complaints of bilateral low back pain radiating to both legs with associated weakness, numbness, and tingling; and bilateral neck pain radiating to the left arm/left shoulder. Ms. Mirand diagnosed cervicalgia, lumbago, shoulder pain; prescribed Tizanidine, Voltaren gel, ordered MRI studies, and recommended physical therapy.

On September 7, 2021, Mr. Hernandez commenced physical therapy.

On September 9, 2021, Cynthia Mirand PA prescribed a Medrol Dosepak 4 mg, for the left shoulder symptoms.

On September 13, 2021, Mr. Hernandez underwent MRIs of the left shoulder and lumbar spine. The left shoulder study revealed: a partial thickness intrasubstance tear of the biceps tendon with fluid in the bicipital sulcus.

The lumbar spine study revealed: at L2-3 and L3-4, disk bulge effacing the ventral aspect of the thecal sac with bilateral neural foraminal narrowing; at L4-5, annular tear, and central disk herniation with effacement of the ventral aspect of the thecal sac with bilateral neural foraminal narrowing; and at L5-S1, central disk herniation with effacement of the ventral aspect of the thecal sac with bilateral neural foraminal narrowing.

On September 21, 2021, Mr. Hernandez presented to Dr. Flanagan who refilled the Tizanidine 2 mg, prescribed Tramadol 50 mg, and injected the left shoulder with a steroid shot. Dr. Flanagan discussed platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections with physical therapy rehabilitation for non-surgical management of the left shoulder.

On October 5 and November 7, 2021, Mr. Hernandez returned to Dr. Flanagan with persistent pain. Dr. Flanagan scheduled a PRP injection and recommended chiropractic therapy for the lower back, adjunct with physical therapy.

On November 16, 2021, Mr. Hernandez was released from physical therapy.

On November 22, 2021, Mr. Hernandez revisited Dr. Charles Mitzelfeld (chiropractic-refer to prior history) with worsening pain in his neck, mid-lower back (mainly left side and radiating to the left buttock), left shoulder, and upper arms, with associated numbness and tingling. Dr. Mitzelfeld initiated therapeutic treatment, ordered another lumbar MRI, and recommended modalities 3 x week for 5 weeks.

On November 30, 2021, Dr. Flanagan performed a PRP injection for the left shoulder bicep tear.

On January 14, 2022, Mr. Hernandez updated the lumbar MRI which revealed: at L3-4, central and left-sided disk herniation and associated annular tear, mild retrolisthesis, moderate to severe central canal stenosis and mild bilateral foraminal narrowing; at L4-5, central annular tear and a central broad based disk herniation, large associated annular tear, moderate central canal stenosis and moderate bilateral foraminal stenosis; at L5-S1, Grade 1 anterolisthesis related to bilateral spondylolysis fractures of L5, superimposed broad based central and slightly right-sided disk herniation extending into the right L5 neural foramen, moderate foraminal narrowing and crowding of the exiting nerve root, moderate central canal stenosis and mild left-sided foraminal stenosis.

On January 17, 2022, Mr. Hernandez presented to Dr. Michael Chaparro (neurosurgery). He reported persistent pain in his left shoulder, weakness in his left hand, left sided neck pain and left lumbar radicular symptomatology. Dr. Chaparro diagnosed cervical myelopathy, lumbar spondylosis, and lumbar radiculopathy; ordered an MRI of the cervical spine and a CT scan of the lumbar spine to evaluate the spondylolisthesis at L5.

On January 31, 2022, Mr. Hernandez underwent the cervical MRI which revealed: at C5-6 central disk osteophyte complex indenting the ventral aspect of the spinal cord; suspected ossification of the posterior longitudinal ligaments partially effacing the ventral aspect of the thecal sac at the C5 and 6 vertebral bodies; at C2-3, shallow disk osteophyte complex partially effacing the ventral aspect of the thecal sac.

The lumbar spine CT revealed: 0.3 cm Grade 1 anterolisthesis with associated bilateral pars defects; discogenic and spondylitic changes including L4-5 right paracentral disk protrusion with mild spinal canal narrowing and mild bilateral neural foraminal narrowing; at L3-4, shallow disk bulge partially effacing the ventral aspect of the thecal sac; at L4-5, disk bulge with superimposed right paracentral disk protrusion with mild spinal canal narrowing and mild bilateral neural foraminal narrowing; at L5-S1, partial uncovering of the disk space resulting in pseudo bule with superimposed true disk bulge with partial effacement of the thecal sac and mild bilateral neural foraminal narrowing.

On February 10, 2022, Dr. Mitzelfeld released Mr. Hernandez from chiropractic care to follow up as needed.

On February 14, 2022, Mr. Hernandez returned to Dr. Chaparro who noted cord impingement with myelopathic reflexes and discussed surgically treating the cervical spine, initially (as priority). He recommended Mr. Hernandez utilize as TLSO (spinal brace) to limit motion and reduce the pain. Mr. Hernandez agreed to proceed with the neck surgery (anterior cervical discectomy and fusion at C5-6).

**On March 15, 2022, Dr. Chaparro performed the C5-6 anterior cervical discectomy and fusion.**

On March 28, 2022, Mr. Hernandez returned to Dr. Chaparro for post-operative evaluation. His neck and upper extremity symptomatology had greatly improved but pain persisted in his lower back and bilateral lower extremities. Dr. Chaparro recommended proceeding with lumbar decompression and fusion once he had fully recovered from the neck surgery.

On July 14, 2022, Mr. Hernandez updated the lumbar MRI which revealed: at L4-5, annular bulge with small annular tear and central disk herniation; at L5-S1, bilateral spondylolysis with 3.5 mm anterior listhesis of L5 with respect to S1.

**On August 9, 2022, Dr. Chaparro performed an L3-5 laminectomy with facetectomies for decompression of cauda equina and spinal nerves; L3-4, 4-5 and L5-S1 interbody and posterolateral fusion.**

On September 2, 2022, Mr. Hernandez started occupational and physical rehabilitative therapy and underwent treatment through January 31, 2023.

On September 16, 2022, Mr. Hernandez presented to Dr. Martin Segel (neuropsychology) with concerns for anxiety, panic attacks and depression since the crash. Mr. Hernandez subsequently underwent multiple cognitive behavioral interventions with Dr. Segel through November 30, 2022.

On December 21, 2022, February 1, and May 1, 2023, Mr. Hernandez revisited Dr. Chaparro’s office with complaints of occasional spasms in the left thoracolumbar paraspinal muscles (associated with activity) and with some sensory deficit on the right shin. On examination he had dysesthesias to soft touch and pinprick in the right L4 and L5 distributions. Maria Alves, NP, prescribed Gabapentin.

*Pre-crash medical history*

Height: 5 ft 8 inches

Weight: 221 lbs.

Mr. Hernandez was undergoing therapy with Dr. Charles Mitzelfeld (chiropractic) for lower back pain at the time of the subject crash (initial visit on July 15, 2020, then subsequent visits on July 29, 2021, through August 12, 2021, 12 days prior to the subject crash. Following the latter consultation Dr. Mitzelfeld placed Mr. Hernandez at MMI (maximum medical improvement).

*Medical and other records reviewed for history*

Florida Traffic Crash Report

Foundation Chiropractic (prior/post)

Shree MRI

Palms West Hospital, operative reports

Palms West Hospital, cervical MRI

MRI Specialists

South Florida Neurosurgical and Spinal Wellness Center, Dr. Chaparro

The Outpatient Rehabilitation & Aquatics Center

BioCare Orthopedics & Spine Institute, Dr. Flanagan

Segel Psychological Center, Dr. Segel