



Who is Fred Amir?

Fred Amir is the founder and president of Health Solutions and author of *Rapid Recovery from Back and Neck Pain: A Nine-Step Recovery Plan*, *Mesh-Free Hernia Repair*, *Rapid Recovery from Enlarged Prostate Symptoms*, and is the winner of The University of California's Knowles Ryerson award for leadership.

Fred is the creator of the *Nine-Step Rapid Recovery Plan*: a proven, step-by-step plan, which enhances New York University's treatment program by applying techniques used by Olympic athletes. The Rapid Recovery plan helped Fred recover immediately, rapidly, and completely from disabling pain and has helped readers around the world conquer their pain and disability in order to reclaim their lives. Whether it is going back to work, distant running, playing with their children, traveling around the world, or simply being able to bend down and pick up a pen, those who have recovered rapidly can tell you it has been nothing short of a miracle.

As the Rapid Recovery Coach for more than 25 years, Fred Amir has helped his clients become pain-free and live active, productive lives. Fred has conducted seminars for the University of California's Office of The President, CIGNA Group Insurance, Iowa State University, Santa Clara County, and other organizations.

Fred will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the publication of *Rapid Recovery from Back and Neck Pain: A Nine-Step Recovery Plan* this April.

Learn more at www.fredamir.com.

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Topics of Discussion

1. Fred's experience with chronic back, neck, knee, leg, foot, arm and hand pain and total disability.
2. His search for answers and discovery of pain facts your doctor may not tell their patients, such as failed treatments and normal "abnormalities" of the spinal, shoulder, and knee, such as a herniated disc, torn rotator cuff, and torn meniscus.
3. The real cause of most back and neck pain as discovered by Dr. John Sarno of New York University and how the pain becomes chronic.
4. How Fred recovered immediately, rapidly, and completely applying techniques used by Olympic athletes and high achievers.
5. Core techniques in Fred's *Nine-Step Rapid Recovery Plan* to help audiences design their own Rapid Recovery plan and get on the road to living pain-free during the program.

Suggested Questions for Fred Amir

1. So, Fred can you tell me how did you end up with back and neck pain, sciatica in both legs and totally disabled?
2. What kind of diagnosis did you receive for all this pain?
3. What did your research into back pain reveal?
4. So, Fred if structural abnormalities are not responsible for the pain, and treatments fail most of the time, then what was it?
5. Is Dr. Sarno saying that the pain is in your head?
6. So how do you treat tension myoneural syndrome (TMS)?
7. If you could tell our listeners who are still in a lot of pain one last thing, what would it be

FAQs

1. Are you saying that all back pain is caused by tension?
2. So how do I know whether my back pain is due to an injury or is from tension?
3. How do I know my back pain is not from too much work?
4. What role do chiropractors play? How about acupuncture?
5. What about the placebo effect?
6. What about meditation and relaxation techniques?
7. What are some other conditions that can be caused by tension?

Rapid Recovery from Back and Neck Pain: A Nine-Step Recovery Plan

by Fred Amir

It all began with a simple case of back pain. Over time, due to improper diagnoses and inappropriate treatments, I developed pain in my neck, knees, elbows, and one shoulder, as well as pain and numbness in my legs, arms, and hands. I suffered gastritis due to my use of prescription and over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications. I was constantly in pain and became severely disabled. At one point the pain was so severe that I was not able to stand or sit for more than fifteen minutes at a time, climb two steps, lift a glass of water, or even write two lines.

My life became limited in ways that I had never imagined. I could not visit anyone and was reluctant to allow visitors. The most painful part emotionally was not being able to play with my children or even let them close to me. I had to stay away from work and was faced with serious questions about my career, my future, and my life, especially as a husband and father. All this—and I was only thirty years old.

I was seen by general practitioners as well as back specialists and even a nationally known orthopedic surgeon. Each one had his own diagnosis. I was diagnosed with osteoarthritis of the spine, degenerated discs, sprained back muscles, pinched nerve, herniated discs, leaky discs, and piriformis syndrome as possible causes for my back and leg pain. I was given a wide variety of different medications and treatments, some of which caused more pain and disability and made my condition worse.

Early in this painful and often frustrating ordeal, I discovered that the medical professionals themselves were baffled by back pain. Not only did they have difficulty making an accurate diagnosis and prescribing effective treatment, but they were incapable of providing satisfactory answers to my simplest questions about back pain:

- Why are the majority of people with back pain were young like me?
- Why, unlike a broken bone, does back pain not heal, instead often lasting for years?
- If weak muscles are the cause, how strong do back muscles have to be for one to recover? Do we all need to become bodybuilders to be free of pain?
- If improper sitting and bending can damage the back, why aren't gymnasts and other athletes who put tremendous pressure on their spines all suffering from debilitating back pain?

To these and many other questions, which appeared simple enough for back specialists and experts to resolve, the responses were unconvincing answers, shrugged shoulders, or simply: "Well, that's how back pain is!"

According to one of the foremost authorities on the subject, Richard Deyo, M.D., "Up to 85% of back pain cannot be given a definitive diagnosis."

In the face of the medical community's apparent ineptitude in treating back pain—and the fact that some of the treatments prescribed for me actually made my condition worse—I realized that I could no longer afford to be a passive patient.

I began to take an active role in my diagnosis and treatment and tried to become an informed consumer, searching the available literature for a cure to my disabling condition—a condition so prevalent that it has become a national health problem. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of treatments for back, neck, and hand pain is quite disappointing.

- “Surgery has been found to be helpful in only 1 in 100 cases of patients with low back pain. In some people, surgery can even cause more problems.” So concluded the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services after conducting a comprehensive study of more than 10,000 cases of back pain.
- “Injecting methylprednisolone acetate [cortisone] into the facet joints is of little value in the treatment of patients with chronic low back pain.” This was the conclusion of a study published in The New England Journal of Medicine.
- “Treatments [for whiplash-associated disorders] evaluated in a rigorous manner show little or no evidence of efficacy.” This finding was the result of an exhaustive study conducted at McGill University. Researchers found treatments ranging from a neck collar to traction to be of little or no value.
- “Correcting carpal tunnel syndrome is one of the most common operations performed today. The only problem is, it often doesn’t work,” concluded researchers at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

Even though these facts have appeared in some of the most authoritative and prestigious medical journals, you will not learn this crucial information from most specialists, inside or outside the medical profession. Indeed, these treatments are used so widely that you may be shocked to learn that they don’t work in the majority of cases!

The more I studied the medical journals and scientific literature, the more I came across such studies and the more I realized that what we really need is an accurate diagnosis. Lack of a correct diagnosis is the number-one reason why this condition has become a major health problem. As mentioned earlier, as many as 85% of patients with low back pain never receive a definitive diagnosis. Without a definitive diagnosis, a cure cannot be expected. Once we have the correct diagnosis, the solution can be quite simple!

After months of searching and reading, I received information in the mail about the work of John Sarno, M.D., a professor of rehabilitative medicine at New York University, who was also trying to determine the correct diagnosis for back pain. He too was disappointed with the failure of common treatments and realized the need for a new understanding.

As he looked deeper into the medical histories of his patients, Dr. Sarno discovered something that is often neglected by medical professionals. He noticed that 88 percent of his patients had histories of disorders such as migraine headaches, colitis, stomach ulcers, hay fever, asthma, eczema, and high blood pressure. These disorders were strongly suspected of being caused by chronic repressed anger, anxiety, worries, frustrations, stress, and tension. Dr. Sarno wondered whether, in the same way, that chronic anger, anxiety, worries, and frustrations can cause physiological changes leading to these illnesses, back pain could also be a physical manifestation of negative emotions.

So, he put this new diagnosis to work and began treating his patients accordingly. At first, the majority of his patients felt there was not enough stress and tension in their lives to cause their pain. Many of them believed that they were handling their teenage children, problems at work, and marital problems effectively. They didn’t realize that these difficult situations were creating a great deal of anger and rage, internally causing pain in various parts of their bodies.

Once Dr. Sarno treated back patients for this new diagnosis and not for some structural abnormality, his patients began to recover. In fact, 98 percent of his patients with confirmed cases of herniated disc recovered without surgery—certainly a much better result than the 1 percent success rate experienced with surgery.

I know what most of you are thinking: “Not me!” That was exactly my response to the notion that tension and stress were causing my pain. Being a calm, positive person who rarely gets angry or tense and considering the extent of my pain and disability, I was quite skeptical about whether Dr. Sarno’s findings applied to me. Moreover, I had studied psychology I knew about Type A personality and how anger and tension can cause ulcer and heart attack. So, I had done a lot to stay calm and relaxed under stress and was quite aware of the workings of the subconscious mind. However, I figured I had nothing to lose by keeping an open mind and learning more. At the very least, maybe what I learned could help someone else.

As I learned more about Dr. Sarno’s explanation of the pattern of pain and why the pain moves around and becomes chronic, I found convincing answers to all my questions and more. I began to see why so many people under the age of fifty facing career and family responsibilities suffer from chronic pain; why, unlike a broken bone that heals, back pain becomes chronic and can last for years; why we do not see an epidemic of disabling back and leg pain among Olympic and professional athletes who put tremendous pressure on their spines; and why, because the mind/body connection is so often neglected, the causes of as much as 85% of back pain are not clear. Dr. Sarno’s explanation, of course, makes it clear why surgery and most treatments directed at correcting “spinal abnormalities” fail to help most people.

With this new understanding, I combined his treatment program with my knowledge of psychology and mental techniques used by Olympic athletes for peak performance to design an effective nine-step rapid recovery plan. This plan enabled me to begin my journey toward a pain-free and able life immediately.

My improvements could be seen daily and astonished those who knew how disabled I had been. Within the first twenty-four days of my recovery, I was able to stand, bend, sit, and sleep comfortably. I was also able to walk without a limp, climb stairs, wear a tie, exercise on a cross-country ski machine, and swim. On the second day of my recovery, I climbed seventeen steps. The climax of my recovery was when, less than two weeks later, I was able to carry both of my children, each weighing over forty pounds. This I had not been able to do for more than two years due to pain in my back, legs, knees, and arms. It felt wonderful. And one month later I began taking karate lessons.

But there was more. I had suffered from hay fever for seventeen years and had taken antihistamines to control my sneezing and itchy, watery eyes. However, with my new understanding that hay fever is one of the many disorders caused by tension, by using the strategies in my nine-step recovery plan I was able to eliminate it quickly.

Then, during a routine eye exam, the ophthalmologist told me that my eyes were fine and I no longer needed the reading glasses I had been wearing for the past fourteen years! I was so surprised that I sought a second opinion. The second ophthalmologist confirmed the diagnosis. I discovered that tension played a key role here too. In fact, decades ago, noted ophthalmologist Dr. William Bates recognized the relationship between tension and nearsightedness and other changes in the eye refraction. He designed a program for reversing the effects of tension on the eyes and eliminating the need for glasses.

Needless to say, at times I was amazed and overwhelmed by these improvements in my health in such a short time. I was also so excited about my discovery that I began sharing it with everyone I knew—and they began to get well! In order to reach more people, I taught seminars and workshops and explained my system in my book, *Rapid Recovery from Back and Neck Pain: A Nine-Step Recovery Plan*. By the grace of God, I have received e-mails from readers

from around the world who have recovered rapidly by reading my story and applying my rapid recovery plan. To read their stories, please visit <http://www.fredamir.com>.

So, what were the causes of anger and tension in my life, which were the real causes of my pain? They had to do with my marriage and my parents. They were nothing out of the ordinary. We all experience problems and tensions in our relationships with our parents, spouses, children, friends, and co-workers; what is important is to realize the limitations in our capacity to please others and to cope with chronic stress.

It is vital to understand that, as calm and in control, as we might appear on a conscious level, there is a part of us all deep within, on the subconscious level, that may resent certain aspects of a relationship or a situation, be it at home or at work. Unless those troubling issues are resolved through mutual respect and good communication, or through positive changes in our circumstances, it is quite natural to expect physical manifestations of the repressed anger, anxiety, and tension in the form of bodily aches and pains.

I have to admit I was quite surprised at how easily I could resolve the issues that were the sources of my chronic anger and anxiety. I have dedicated Chapter Seven of my book, titled "The Road to Wellness," to discussing empowering concepts and strategies that have helped me stay pain-free and healthy. You will find nine steps for establishing good communication and resolving conflicts with your loved ones and others, eleven strategies for coping with stress and tension, four steps for immediately improving a marriage, and a three-step plan for raising well-disciplined, goal-oriented children with high self-esteem.

These techniques have resolved the issues that were chronic sources of anger, anxiety, frustration, and tension in my life and have made me much happier and healthier.