



**NAME:** Sophie  
**AGE:** 52

**REASON FOR CONSULTING  
BEST DOCTORS:**

Pain getting worse and considering spinal surgery

**BEST DOCTORS EXPERT SPECIALTY:**  
Neurosurgery

“ Right from the start, Best Doctors met my expectations. I wouldn’t change a thing, they provide an excellent service.”

## SURGERY AVOIDED AND PROGNOSIS EXCELLENT

Sophie had been suffering from low back pain for 25 years. Although the pain was manageable at first, it became progressively severe. As time went by, she also began to experience sharp, shooting pains in her legs, as well as frequent episodes of dizziness and noise intolerance.

Even though she was tentatively diagnosed with an inflammatory condition known as ankylosing spondylitis, all attempts at treatment – physiotherapy, medication and even injections – brought limited to no relief. The pain grew to be a constant presence in her life, making even the simplest everyday activities a struggle, and she felt helpless as her work, family and relationships all suffered as a result of the difficulties caused by her condition.

Sophie’s doctor had suggested she consider surgery, yet she was unsure if this was right for her. When she realised that she had access to Best Doctors as part of her insurance policy, she decided to contact them for help.

“ I was in constant pain and my doctors did not think anything significant was the matter. I simply could not accept this, and decided to contact Best Doctors.”

Speaking to Sophie, the Best Doctors team understood her sense of desperation, after so many years in pain. After ensuring that all of her medical records had been

collected, they compiled everything into a detailed Clinical Summary, which was then sent to a world leading neurosurgeon. After an exhaustive review of her case, the expert concluded that she was not suffering from ankylosing spondylitis, but from two different conditions, both contributing to her symptoms: a degenerative disc condition affecting different areas of her spinal cord as well as narrowing in her spinal canal and its nerve passageways.

The expert was firmly against the idea of surgery as a first option, and felt that Sophie could alleviate all or most of her symptoms by following a physiotherapy-based treatment regimen focused on restoring core strength and spinal flexibility. If this did not prove effective, he advised her to undergo specialised further testing for spinal canal and nerve root compression. Only if significant compression was discovered should she consider any kind of surgery, and even then it should be limited to an outpatient microdecompression procedure.

The expert was very optimistic that Sophie could make a real recovery, improving her range of motion and returning to a normal lifestyle without the need for surgery. Sophie has since then decided to follow the recommended therapy programme.

**AFTER SO MANY YEARS IN PAIN, RELIEF IS IN SIGHT**