

What's important to you today?



The Buffalo News : City & Region

Monday, March 5, 2007

Home > City & Region

Depew native helps girl end hiccup ordeal

By Harold McNeil NEWS STAFF REPORTER
Updated: 03/04/07 4:06 PM



Depew native Dr. Eric Springer does an adjustment for Jennifer Mee, who was hiccupping for 37 days straight.

A chiropractor who grew up in Depew had a hand in helping a St. Petersburg, Fla., teenager stop hiccupping after 37 straight days.

Dr. Eric Springer said he was part of a team of specialists — including an acupuncturist and a hypnotist — who helped bring relief to 15-year-old Jennifer Mee of St. Petersburg.

Jennifer began hiccupping on Jan. 23, according to her mother, Rachel Robidoux. Despite trying numerous remedies, such as standing on her head and swallowing spoons full of sugar, the spasms continued unabated for 37 days. They stopped on Thursday.

“It was a team effort,” Springer said by phone. “There were a lot of things involved in getting her body to correct itself.”

Springer, a 1995 graduate of Depew High School who earned his undergraduate degree from Fredonia State College in

1999, moved to St. Petersburg about three years ago after completing his graduate work at Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa.

Springer, 29, who has many family members in the Depew- Cheektowaga area, said he learned of Jennifer’s predicament through the media and offered his services through a St. Petersburg radio station. The girl’s family took him up on his offer, as well as the services of many other specialists.

“The mother of the girl contacted me, and I brought her in as a patient. We did an exam and took X-rays and started treatment, which included some chiropractic adjustments that entailed some gentle force to the neck,” Springer said.

None of the experts had a definitive diagnosis for what was causing Jennifer's unusual condition, Springer said. However, he said an X-ray revealed that Jennifer had a compression on a nerve in her cervical spine, which is in the neck region and begins at the base of the skull.

From five to seven doctors saw the girl, Springer said, but he was only one of a handful of specialists treating her on a regular basis.

"I had just started treating her last week, and she actually stopped on the day of her last adjustment," he said. "I was the only chiropractor involved, but I don't want to take full credit for [Jennifer being cured]. I'm just glad I was able to help her out."

Springer said the unrelenting spasms and the media attention undoubtedly caused Jennifer a lot of stress.

"I'm pretty sure she was glad it was over, but we're still searching for a reason for why this happened. It's still unexplained," he said.

Last week, she had appointments with an infectious-disease specialist, a neurologist and an acupuncturist, according to a report in the St. Petersburg Times. She tried a couple of new prescription drugs as well as the Hic-Cup — a patented device that seemed to ease her condition. She also spoke by phone with a California faith healer, who correctly predicted the hour she would feel relief.

"I'm happy that everyone worked together for the benefit of Jen," he told the Times. "What a great girl."

And the ninth-grader, who had to stop going to school on Jan. 23 when she started hiccuping, has asked asked her family to strike a word from its vocabulary, the Time report said.

"Never use that word again," she told her mother. "Never say the 'H' word again."

hmcneil@buffnews.com

© 2007 The Buffalo News. The information you receive online from The Buffalo News is protected by the copyright laws of the United States.

The copyright laws prohibit any copying, redistributing, re-transmitting, or re-purposing of any copyright-protected material.