

Health Profile

by Lisa Melillo, photo by Dan Epstein

GET RID OF THE PAIN FOR GOOD

Dr. Annette Da Silva, physiatrist at The Center for Medical Healing

This physiatrist's goal is to eradicate chronic suffering—whatever the cause

Many people have never heard of a physiatrist: a physician who specializes in physical medicine or physical therapy. But if you're in pain, consulting this specialist can help you gain a quality of life you might not consider possible.

Whether your pain is from a recent injury or chronic condition, Dr. Annette Da Silva, board certified physiatrist, can get you started on the road to recovery. "There's no reason why anyone should suffer from pain, regardless of the cause," she says. New York University-trained, the doctor started private practice in 2001, and in addition to Montclair, has offices in Kearny (her hometown) and New York City.

Starting with a comprehensive initial examination, the doctor creates a treatment plan using a variety of non-surgical modalities customized to fit patients' unique needs. Treatments include physical, ultrasound, injection and massage therapies, and TENS (low-voltage electrical stimulation). "If I need to combine these with medication, I will," she notes. "But I try to avoid medications."

Dr. Da Silva can treat pain from a variety

of causes: back and neck problems, arthritis, bursitis, tendonitis, and chronic illness, to sports and work injuries. "The thing that sets me apart from most people is the fact that I'm trained and certified as an MD, and I'm also certified to do osteopathic manipulations," she says. In fact, the doctor notes, patients aren't used to seeing a doctor who can both write prescriptions and also make physical adjustments. She notes, "Having both backgrounds is a good thing."

Clearly a "people person," this young, enthusiastic physician enjoys close interaction with patients and, most importantly, the opportunity to make a difference in their lives. "I want to see someone turn around and really thrive," the doctor suggests. "I've had wheelchair-bound MS patients whom I've helped get up on their feet with walkers." These patients may not be running marathons, she adds, but they can go to the store, the mall, and do basic things that were once too challenging. She finds that very rewarding.

The doctor wholeheartedly believes that her mission is not only to treat her patients, but also to empower them. This philosophy, combined

with patients' requests, impelled the physiatrist to add complete care for total health and wellness to her practice. These include acupuncture, weight loss, smoking cessation, and assistive devices to improve physical functionality. She also performs mesotherapy—a minimally invasive procedure widely used in Europe—that targets problem areas with micro-injections.

With what she terms a "customer-oriented" practice, Dr. Da Silva is accessible to her patients at any time. "They know that if they need me, 99 percent of the time they can get me on the phone in three minutes," she notes. "My practice is very personalized. They're never fearful, and for someone in pain, that's a big thing. It's wonderful to have patients who not only stay with you, but refer their mother, brother, or sister to your care." And, according to the Dr. Da Silva, that's the best compliment a doctor can get. ▲

The Center for Medical Healing

292 Bloomfield Avenue, Montclair
888-485-0001
Thecenterformedicalhealing.com