

## Expert care for improving the lives of individuals with Multiple Sclerosis

In September 2007, Jennifer, a 32-year-old paralegal and an avid cyclist, had noted gradually progressive numbness in both legs and a band-like sensation around her mid-chest and abdomen over the past five days. She recalls having moderate but sudden onset of vision problems in her left eye approximately 10 years earlier while she was in college which spontaneously resolved after three weeks. She never bothered to get evaluated for the condition. For these new symptoms, Jennifer was evaluated by her primary care physician who, due to the suspicious nature of Multiple Sclerosis (MS), referred her to Daniel S. Bandari, M.D., at the MS Center at Hoag Hospital for further evaluation.

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As a result of non-specific symptoms and mild attacks, many new cases of Multiple Sclerosis (MS) often go unrecognized for some time, which consequently causes delays in evaluation, diagnosis and timely treatment.

To help promote awareness and combat this growing disease, Hoag Neurosciences partnered with a local expert to establish a new Multiple Sclerosis Center. Focusing on a comprehensive approach to MS care, services offered include, but are not limited to:

- Early and expert diagnoses of the disease
- Novel medical treatment and management of MS symptoms
- Promoting mobility for patients with physical impairments
- Minimizing secondary complications
- Maximizing independence and improving quality of life
- Coping with psychological implications
- State-of-the-art and innovative research and clinical trials
- Providing education to patients, their families and care givers

### Multiple Sclerosis Center at Hoag

The Medical Director of the center, Daniel S. Bandari, M.D., is a fellowship-trained expert in Multiple Sclerosis. He is the previous director of the MS clinic and research group in the Department of Neurology at the University of Southern California (USC), with many years of experience in treatment and research in MS and neuro-immunology.

“We are excited to have Dr. Bandari leading this innovative new center. He brings with him many years of experience in treatment and research in both Multiple Sclerosis and neuro-immunology,” says Michael Brant-Zawadzki, M.D., F.A.C.R., executive medical director of Hoag Neurosciences Institute.

### Expert Patient Care

Hoag’s Multiple Sclerosis Center offers a broad range of comprehensive services, including:

- Expert evaluation, consultation and continuous neurological care for patients with:
  - Multiple Sclerosis
  - Transverse Myelitis
  - Other Demyelinating disorders
- The most advanced MRI scanners and techniques – conveniently housed in the Advanced Technology Pavilion at Hoag:
  - High-resolution 3 Tesla MRI
  - MR Spectroscopy
  - Diffusion Tensor Imaging
  - Brain atrophy measurements
- Spasticity clinic
- Neuropsychology and cognitive clinic
- Infusion center
- Physical and Occupational Therapy
- Hoag Voice & Swallowing Center
- Hoag Neurobehavioral Medicine Program

### Research and Clinical Trials

Dr. Bandari’s research has focused on neuro-immunology and demyelinating disorders of the central nervous system and more specifically on MS. His current projects incorporate research in new pharmacologic treatments for MS including oral and infusible medications, clinical trials in cognitive dysfunction in MS, clinical studies in neuro-protection, neuro-regeneration and Neuronal Stem Cell project in MS, and improvement in quality of life in MS patients including innovating treatments for spasticity and fatigue related to MS. Dr. Bandari is currently a primary investigator and co-investigator in numerous multi-center clinical trials of new diagnostic methods and treatments of MS.

After thorough clinical history and examinations, Jennifer’s MRIs indicated presence of multiple demyelinating lesions in her brain and spinal cord (figures 1 and 2).



Exclusionary and other possible diagnosis were thoroughly evaluated and ruled out through imaging and extensive laboratory work up. A few days after the diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis was made, Jennifer started a FDA approved Disease Modifying Drug (DMD).

Over the past two years, Jennifer has been under close care and follow-up at the MS Center at Hoag. She has been relapse-free and her recent MRIs have not shown any new activities nor progression of the disease. She has been receiving comprehensive care through a team consisting of a MS expert neurologist, radiologist, psychologist and physical therapist. She has participated in numerous MS fund raising events, especially cycling events, and has been working full-time. She is now in the process of going back to school and obtaining her law degree.

### To Refer a Patient

*For more information or to contact the Multiple Sclerosis Center, please call Hoag Neurosciences Institute at 949/764-6066.*