

# The Pain That Won't Go Away

Category: In Pain

written by Sandy Brown | October 10, 2017

My wife lives with pain. It followed a failed shoulder surgery two years ago and wasn't supposed to happen with a simple laparoscopic rotator cuff repair. But, due to prolonged traction and an errant scalene nerve block, she suffered a median neuritis that rendered her dominant hand useless, and nothing has been able to fix it.

Opiates distract her from her pain but have rendered her drug-dependent and chronically fatigued and constipated. Almost as bad was her doctors' unwillingness to communicate with us when it became obvious that they were at fault, without taking responsibility and apologizing for the maiming they had caused.

Iatrogenic injury causing pain is unfortunately all too common in our profession, as doctors obfuscate, stonewall and ultimately deny their culpability, refusing to let their insurance carriers settle. Or sometimes their insurance company attorneys won't let them admit fault, even though they might want to.

This is the dark underside of medical malpractice insurance; we carry it because we want to be responsible if we hurt our patients, but then we won't or can't use it to compensate them for their injuries. That adds salt to the wound.

My wife has implored me to move on. She has but I can't forgive the doctors who lawyered up and hid instead of admitting that they are only human and make mistakes and patients suffer. That is the pain that I live with every day.

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