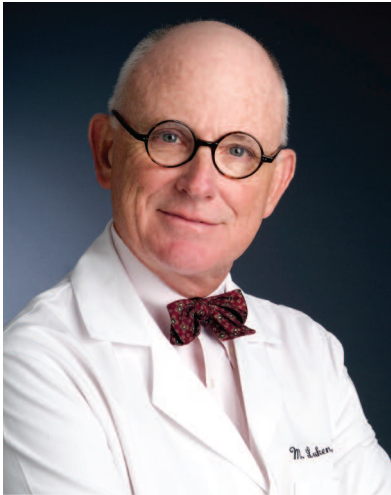


## Back procedure “nothing short of miraculous”



Dr. Martin Luken

Everyday activities like cooking, climbing the stairs and brushing your teeth are things we all take for granted. But for 44-year-old Theresa Meyer of Lynwood, they once proved nearly impossible.

Meyer, who suffers from fibromyalgia, a chronic condition characterized by fatigue and widespread pain, and chronic fatigue syndrome, a complex disorder causing

extreme prolonged fatigue, had grown accustomed to living with pain. But in the spring of 2004, she awoke and couldn't get out of bed.

“This pain was different,” she explained. An MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan showed Meyer was suffering from spinal stenosis, a narrowing of spaces in the spine that results in pressure on the spinal cord and/or nerve roots.

Meyer spent several frustrating months consulting with specialists, even traveling to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

“Everyone agreed that I was a candidate for a lumbar laminectomy, but everyone turned me down because of my co-existing medical conditions,” Meyer said. “It is said that once Mayo Clinic turns you down, don't expect anyone else to perform the surgery.”

Meyer finally got the answer she was looking for when she went to see Martin Luken, M.D., board-certified neurosurgeon for the Chicago Institute of Neurosurgery and Neuroresearch (CINN) at Ingalls Memorial Hospital in Harvey.

“Dr. David Orth, a business associate of my husband's (and medical director of the Irwin Retina Center at Ingalls), referred us,” she remembers. “Dr. Luken told us there was no doubt that I had spinal stenosis, and that he would perform the surgery. We were amazed.”

So in October 2005, Meyer underwent a lumbar decompression surgery – or laminectomy – at Ingalls. The surgery is done to relieve pressure on the spinal cord or spinal nerve roots caused by age-related changes in the spine and to treat other conditions, such as injuries to the spine, herniated discs or tumors.

Meyer underwent surgery on a Thursday and by Sunday was recovering at home. “Within the first week, my fibromyalgia pain went back down to a four,” she recalls. “The outcome of the surgery was nothing short of miraculous.”

What's more, the pain caused by the spinal stenosis was relieved nearly 95% shortly after the surgery.

“Dr. Luken is my angel,” she said. “He's such a great man. He is an expert professional in his field and, at the same time, a truly compassionate person.”

After several months of physical therapy, Meyer is doing well and is planning an upcoming move to Reno, Nev., with her beloved husband, Michael, whom she describes as her “rock and foundation.”

“I plan to get back to hiking, resuming my career as an occupational therapist and socializing again,” Meyer added. “I even told one of my specialists in Charlotte, N.C., that it would be worth the trip to see Dr. Luken.” <