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Pain relieved

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When Larry Munro was attacked by a neighbour's German shepherd dogs seven years ago, he twisted his body and kicked to try to protect himself and retain his balance. When he was bitten at the back of his left knee, he felt a shock-like sensation of pain in his lower back.

Munro, now 50, who lives in Kincardine, was left with a numb left leg, and he lost the ability to lift the toes on that foot. He also had an intensification of what had previously been mild lower back pain. Several months later when he was turning away from a wall-mounted telephone, he was struck by acute pain.

"I lived on the floor for the next 30 days. I couldn't sit. I would roll around on the floor trying to find some position that would ease the unbelievable burning pain. My kids would put my plate of food on the floor for me."

Surgery briefly left him pain-free, but the pain built up again over a period of weeks. His surgeon diagnosed battered nerve root syndrome. He took sick leave from the Ontario Provincial Police and ended up on long-term disability. Doctors told him they could do nothing but give him painkillers.

One day the neighbour who owns the German shepherds recommended a traditional Chinese medicine doctor, Stanley Gwo-Wuu Shyu.

"I met Dr. Shyu in November 2004 for my first treatment," recalls Munro. "I hadn't been able to sit for years. I was leaning against a wall and he put small needles in the back of each knee, on the outside of my elbows and in each index finger. He left the needles in while I talked to him briefly. About 30 seconds later he pulled them out and told me to sit down — and I did! I sat down and there was no pain."

The pain crept back after a few days, but the pain-free periods have lengthened with every acupuncture treatment.

"Larry's back," he announces. "I'm not crippled any more."

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