

## Back pain no more!

Back pain is one of modern society's most common afflictions. But **Neil Lynas** thinks he may have found the solution...

**I**f you've suffered with the agony and frustration of back pain for many years you may have given up on ever finding a cure...

And, the statistics out there aren't that promising; 80 per cent of us are expected to have back pain in our lifetime, 14 million back-related visits to GPs across the UK every year, £480m is spent by the NHS each year treating back pain with 120 million days sick-leave taken annually and a £5bn cost to business and industry.

I'm like many people out there – had a reasonably healthy existence until I slipped and fell while on board a cruise ship far from home last July.

A cynic from birth, I refused to even visit my GP with the problem – opting instead for a cocktail of painkillers and some light exercise.

However, when the pain reached unbearable and indescribable proportions I chatted with a few friends, many of whom had spent the best part of 20 years

researching supposed cures and taking one form of anti-inflammatory or another.

One close friend had spent in excess of £15,000 on numerous specialists, chiropractors and sports physicians – all to no avail. I was nearly at the end of the line and becoming increasingly depressed with the problem when a friend in *The Irish News* suggested I try Raymond Knox, in

Molra, who was bringing a radical new treatment to back-pain sufferers across Ireland and beyond.

Raymond Knox is a successful businessman and family associate for many years who, when we last met, had been a pilot, former athletics champion and one of the north's great motorsports prospects. So I knew from the outset that anything Raymond endorsed or invested in had to have some purpose and direction.

I did not delay: I drove to Molra and found myself face to face with a long-lost acquaintance and the most amazing technological invention I'd ever seen. Those of you who have suffered back pain for years

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■ **FIRM HAND:** The 'Bionic Hand' applies much more force to the source of the problem – generally the spine – than a human physio could

and been to every practitioner recommended out there will identify with the scepticism I felt when Raymond started to expound the merits of this new invention.

#### **The 'Bionic Hand'**

My experience in having visited quite a few 'leading' physios with my back pain was that no matter how hard they prodded and pushed at my back and spine the root cause never seemed to change.

Yes, there was a temporary abating of the symptoms but the arnica herb, codeine and ibuprofen cocktail still had to be endured every four hours. But this treatment is different. Responding to the calls of spinally challenged friends, a Cornish engineer, Robert Taylor, decided that a mechanical device was needed and after years of research came up with a Technology Assisted Micro-Mobilisation and Reflex Stimulation (TAMARS) device – or a 'bionic hand' as I prefer to call it. What the machine lacks by way of a catchy name it more than makes up for in functionality. In essence the bionic hand is slightly larger than an iPod that has four motorised legs or pads which operate at three different settings. The 'spasm' mode relaxes the muscles and prepares the back. Then the 'mobilisation' mode frees up the joints in advance of the crucial 'reflex' phase, which untwists and straightens the spine by stimulating the reflexes in the spinal muscle groups. The mobilisation theory here is that the gadget applies force through the pistons or legs directly to the spine, 'pushing against the transverse processes of adjacent vertebrae, producing counter-

rotational movement' which in turn releases each section of the spine and frees up movement. Simple, I thought to myself. I lay on a specially designed sports therapy bench as Raymond explained how painless the process would be and that my initial 'light' treatment would last about an hour.

I could certainly feel and hear the air-driven pads as this mechanical tarantula roared into life and before I knew it I was relaxed – chilled out even – as I closed my eyes and began to relax.

An hour later and feeling only slightly giddy as I stood up and stretched, I turned to Raymond and accused him of playing an awful trick.

The pain had gone entirely and with it my cynicism.

Waking the next morning I had enjoyed the first full night of sleep in months and edged again to my feet hoping that the symptoms had gone for good. Amazingly, they had.

Raymond and his team at the 21st Century Back Care Clinic in Moira then explained in perfect clarity what had happened to me. Basically the hand applies much more force to the source of the problem (in 97 per cent of cases the spine itself) than a human hand ever could do. It works as a physio can do but with relentless stamina and vigour, along the full length of the spine – and this is what does the trick! Several months on and having rejected Raymond's invitations for another couple of treatments, I've never felt better, there's no back pain at all and I can't stop smiling about it!

■ **Raymond Knox and his team can be contacted directly at the 21st Century Back Care Clinic in Moira on 028 92610616.**