

The logo for Vax-D features the word "Vax" in a stylized, blue, lowercase font. The letter "x" is formed by two intersecting lines. To the right of "Vax" is a grey, 3D-style pill capsule with a white dot in the center. To the right of the capsule is the text "In Their Own Words" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

Vax-D In Their Own Words

June 15, 2007.

My name is Courtney and I am 26 years old. For my entire adult life I have struggled on and off with severe lower back pain. Over the last 10 years I have been to 5 different physiotherapists, 5 different chiropractors, 2 orthopedic surgeons and my family practitioner. Not one of these so-called "health care professionals" could accurately diagnose or treat my pain. It wasn't until I met Dr. Moore that I finally found someone who could truly help me, and for that I am so incredibly thankful!!

I first started having problems with my back in high school. I would throw my back out for a week at a time, a few times a year. All of the muscles in my back would go into spasm to the point where I could barely walk. The solution my family doctor provided came in the form of prescriptions for various pain killers and muscle relaxants. I started to see a chiropractor who was able to give me some relief with various adjustments on my lower back and neck.

Over the next few years of working and then going away for my first year of college, the pattern was much the same: throw my back out, take pain killers, and then visit a chiropractor. No one ever seemed to get to the root of the problem- it was blamed it on my build (I am quite tall & slender), and bad backs seem to run in the family.

During my second year of college at the age of 21 I threw my back out again, but this time it was different. The pain was not just in my lower back but it was an excruciating burning sensation radiating down into my left leg. I had no idea what it was, all I knew was that it was the worst pain I had ever felt in my entire life. My chiropractor at the time suggested it was not muscle pain, rather a disc related problem. I went to my family doctor who prescribed me pain killers & muscle relaxants which didn't seem to work because the pain was so severe. A CT scan revealed that I had a disc herniation at the L3-4 level and diffuse discs bulging at the L4-5 & L5-1 levels. I had no idea what any of it meant or how it was going to get better- I was pretty freaked out to say the least.

I started to see a physiotherapist who tried strengthening exercises, cranial sacral massage, acupuncture and TENS- none of these procedures had any affect on my pain. If anything the pain was getting worse which was extremely discouraging. My doctor started to prescribe me Oxycocet & Demerol for pain and even they weren't working. The next step for me was to see a surgeon. I saw 2 different surgeons, neither of whom wanted to operate on me because I was so young- not that I wanted them to anyway. The thought of someone cutting into my spine and possibly being in more pain or even paralyzed after surgery was not a great option.

After seeing a few different physiotherapists with no positive changes I finally found one who could help me. She introduced me to the Mackenzie method of stretching & exercising which slowly started to make a difference. Slowly being the key word. It took well over a year for the discs to heal and for me to get my life back.

During that entire time not one of the doctors, chiropractors or physiotherapists bothered to figure out WHY this had happened to me at such a young age. All they did was try to treat the immediate problem. It's not like I had some kind of fall or accident that would have caused disc problems. I was told that my condition usually happened to people in their 40's or 50's, not their early 20's. Because I didn't know how this had happened, I stopped seeing chiropractors- I thought maybe all of the adjustments I had gotten over previous years somehow caused my herniation & other disc abnormalities. I didn't know what else to blame it on.

When I thought that things had really improved I moved to Scotland to work and travel for 2 years. Only a few times over those few years did I suffer on and off with sciatic pain, when it flared up I would do my Mackenzie stretches and it would go away. I did lots of walking and swimming to try and keep my back strong the whole time I was away.

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VAX-D In Their Own Words

At the age of 26 I decided that I wanted to get a degree. In the fall of 2006 I started at the University of Guelph to do my Bachelor of Arts. It was quite a busy semester as I had been out of school for so long & it was an adjustment to get back into studying full time and working as well. Exercise got put on hold- my back was feeling ok and I was too busy to fit it in to my schedule. I finished my fall semester with honours and looked forward to going back for my winter semester.

The day before my second semester classes started my left leg was feeling a bit achy. I did my Mackenzie stretches, but the pain didn't seem to be getting better. I put it out of my mind went to the bookstore to purchase my textbooks. While at the store I bent down to pick up some books and when I stood back up I got a searing pain going from my lower back into my left leg. I knew it was happening again. I managed to drive myself home (I still don't know how because the pain was worse than ever before), and went to a walk-in clinic. The doctor on staff told me to take some ibuprofen and see her the next day if I wasn't feeling better. She might as well have prescribed me m&m's- ibuprofen was not going to take this pain away.

First thing the next morning I tried my Mackenzie exercises again but they were making things worse & I could barely walk. I had to go to the Emergency Room at Guelph General Hospital because the pain was so unbearable- I seriously thought I was going to die. The doctor gave me shots of Gravol, Oxycocet & Demerol and told me to see a physiotherapist. He suspected I had a disc herniation, or rather I told him that's what I thought I had and he agreed. I asked him if there were any other options besides physio or surgery for disc related problems- he said no. I knew there had to be something else out there.

I ended up withdrawing from university and resigning from my job- I wasn't physically able to do either. For the entire month of January I was literally on my back, I could barely move. I had to move back home with my parents started seeing a physiotherapist my doctor had recommended. The physiotherapist told me that it must be quite a large herniation and the Mackenzie exercises I tried probably aggravated things. She thought I should get an MRI and see a surgeon. We tried some TENS (which didn't work), and strengthening exercises (which made no sense to me because the disc was not healed yet). I stopped seeing her pretty quickly. I realized that I was going to have to take things into my own hands. I went for an MRI and the report stated that I had a "large disc herniation at the L5-S1 level". My doctor thought surgery was my only option because this seemed much worse than the episode 5 years ago. I was put on a waiting list to see a surgeon in Toronto. The wait just for a consultation was over 1 year.

I was watching TV one night and saw a commercial for VAX-D treatments at the Spinal Care Centre (in North York). I went for a consultation and decided to start treatments immediately. Anything was worth a try before surgery. The clinic was brand new and everyone was very nice- they thought I was a perfect candidate for the procedure. The chiropractor there told me it usually takes anywhere from 20-30 sessions for pain to subside but because I was so young, he hoped it would only take me 10 sessions. He never actually looked at my back, all he did was ask some questions, check out my range of motion and trust the MRI report.

Because my pain was so acute I started at 3 sessions per week. I would go into the clinic and the secretary would put me onto a water massage table to relax my muscles, then a physio assistant would put me on the VAX-D table. The treatments were uncomfortable because of the way they positioned the belt around my waist- it was too low. The circulation in my legs was getting cut off, so along with the severe left sided leg pain both of my thighs would go numb. They decided to lower the amount of tension to compensate. During my entire 10 sessions I never saw the chiropractor. I only dealt with the physio assistant. I found this to be strange considering I was paying \$200 per session, but never said anything. Just before my last session in North York my Mom was driving down Yonge Street in Aurora and saw the sign over Dr. Moore's office for spinal decompression. Since I was living in Newmarket it would be more convenient to have treatments so much closer to home. I called Dr. Moore's office and booked a

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consultation for April 10th. During my final examination at the Spinal Care Centre in North York I told them that I would be going to a clinic in Aurora for future treatments. The 10 sessions I already had did not seem to be making any difference in my pain levels so I was feeling quite discouraged.

The first time I met with Dr. Moore it was like a breath of fresh air. I felt like I finally found someone who really knew what they were talking about and who could help me. After doing an examination of my back & spine he took some x-rays and requested to see my MRI films, not just the reports. He told me what he thought was happening with my spine and made an appointment for the next morning to go over the x-ray results. We met the next morning and the results were quite scary, although for the first time in 10 years I really knew what was wrong with me, WHY it happened and how to fix it. It turns out not only did I have a very large disc herniation but the disc above it was almost completely non-existent. The MRI report missed that. I had an 'S' curve in my spine (scoliosis) and no longer had a natural curve in my neck or lower back (progressive spinal & lumbar degeneration). How all of the "health care professionals" I had been to over so many years had missed all of that is beyond me.

Starting on April 12th I saw Dr. Moore 5 days a week for VAX-D treatments along with chiropractic adjustments. It was much more comfortable than the other clinic because the belt was put around my waist properly. I didn't get any of the numbness like before in my thighs. Because I was more comfortable they were able to pull at a higher tension which in turn facilitated better results, (65 lbs of pressure vs. 40 lbs at the other clinic). If I started to get uncomfortable at any time during the treatments, Sophie would massage my shoulders and back. She was always there to make sure I was doing o.k. which was very comforting. Dr. Moore was always there as well and incredibly positive when I was feeling pain & not getting results right away like I had hoped for. He explained to me that this was going to be a long process of treatments but he was confident that I was going to get better. He was right. Within a few weeks of VAX-D treatments and chiropractic adjustments with Dr. Moore I started to see results. I was standing up straighter and the pain was going away in my legs. I stopped taking my anti-inflammatory & pain medications and began to be more active. I was starting to get my life back!

I would like to thank Dr. Moore, Sophie and Lynn for being so amazing. They are always highly professional and at the same time friendly & welcoming to everyone who walks through their door. I hate to think about where I would be right now if I had not come across Moore Chiropractic! I still have a long way to go, but I am seeing improvements on a daily basis. I've started swimming and bike riding and I am still going for adjustments 3 times a week. My goal is to get back to work & school in the fall, and I am confident that with Dr. Moore's help I will reach that goal!

-Courtney Clarke