



Robert Casillas Staff Photographer

David Starr, a Torrance resident with a chiropractic practice in Redondo Beach, demonstrates the Spinal Stretch device he began assembling two years ago and now sells online. Starr says his device helps decompress the spine and provide pain relief from bulged discs, scoliosis and sciatica.

This is Spinal Stretch

RB chiropractor turns torture into therapy

By **Muhammed El-Hasan**
Staff Writer

David Starr wants to stretch out your spine.

Not like the old-fashioned rack in dungeons, but for therapeutic reasons.

About a decade ago, Starr, a Redondo Beach chiropractor, came up with the idea for the Spinal Stretch, a four-pound contraption that is supposed to decompress the spine.

That decompression allows dehydrated discs in one's lower back to hydrate again, in an effort to reduce lower-back pain.

The Spinal Stretch wraps snugly around a person's waist, with a strap anchored between the door and door jamb. As the users lie on their back, they ratchet a handle that stretches their spine.

Starr, a 58-year-old Torrance resident, started assembling the Spinal Stretch in his garage about two years ago and selling it to his patients.

He joined Torrance businessman Kerry Welsh to mass-produce the device, and recently started selling it on the Internet.

What problems do you believe the Spinal Stretch can solve?

It will help with disc problems, disc bulges, scoliosis, sciatica. It's like brushing your teeth to avoid tooth decay. What we're trying to do is to give people a toothbrush for their back, something to use on a daily basis before the trouble gets too bad.

Couldn't you just hang from a bar to get the same results?

On the Web

www.spinalstretch.com

Absolutely, if you can hang on for 15 minutes. You can use the Spinal Stretch for 15 to 30 minutes daily.

Do you use the device yourself?

Absolutely. Daily.

How's your back?

It's good.

You're not just saying that?

You can't take my word for it because I'm biased. But we have hundreds of testimonials.

How many of your patients have purchased the Spinal Stretch?

Through my office, a couple of hundred.

Are they still your patients?

Periodically they come back. Maybe it's not for low back pain, but for the shoulders, neck, mid-back and periodically for an adjustment for the low back.

What happens if you pull the Spinal Stretch lever too hard?

You'll just slide toward the door.

How much pull does it exert on your back?

It's about 40 percent of your body weight. It's a therapeutic pull.

How much does it cost?

It's \$179.

If the Spinal Stretch becomes huge, when will you retire?

Never. I love what I do. I might do more lecturing and teaching in conjunction with with my practice.

What's the best part of your job?

Without a doubt, someone saying they feel better. And I think the added reward of the Spinal Stretch when they come to me and say they can make themselves feel better.

And the worst part of your job?

Paperwork and insurance companies.

What else can help people avoid lower back pain?

It's important to stay healthy. It's important to keep your weight as ideal as possible and sit no more than you have to.

If you're standing up all day, won't that hurt your feet?

You can't stand all day, but do a little bit of both.

Are you aware that stretching a person's spine had been used, and may still be used, as a form of torture?

Yes.

Were the torturers actually doing their victims a favor?

To a point, yes.