

# Mays & Schnapp Pain Clinic and Rehabilitation Center

## Continuity Leads to Leadership and Expertise in Pain Management

Celebrating a quarter of a century of a successful physician's practice—or any business—is an outstanding achievement. Kit S. Mays, M.D. and Moacir Schnapp, MD are celebrating twenty-five years of collaboration in 2004. Along with the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its Medical Directors, the Mays & Schnapp Pain Clinic and Rehabilitation Center is unique for other reasons. It was the first accredited comprehensive center for treatment of severe chronic pain in North America, and is still the only one in the Mid-South accredited in all areas of adult outpatient rehabilitation by the Commission for Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

Empathetic staffers focus on treating the whole patient, offering a multidisciplinary approach to pain management with education about treatment and medications. Patients appreciate the convenience of having a surgical suite and physical therapy available under one roof. Nurses, physical therapists and other staffers here enjoy a unique expertise because they specialize in pain management therapy and techniques.

Today, science understands more about the nature and causes of pain, Dr. Schnapp explained,

"There is much that is new in the discipline of pain. In the past few years, we have seen a lot of progress." New drugs, procedures, rehabilitation methods, and research can benefit patients who come to them with chronic pain. Diagnostic tools such as MRIs and bone scans have made it possible to more quickly identify underlying problems when pain is the only symptom.

But, Dr. Mays cautioned, physicians must be careful not to let high-tech innovations rob them of the human touch necessary for healing. A hands-on diagnosis and listening to the patient are often as useful as the many imaging systems currently available.



Moacir Schnapp, MD and Kit S. Mays, MD, discuss a patient's progress on the range of motion machine they developed and patented.

The typical Mays and Schnapp Pain Clinic patient may have been to several other physicians and then referred for back or neck pain, cancer pain, nerve damage or other painful conditions. Treatment options run the gamut from anti-inflammatory drugs to opiate analgesics or anti-seizure medications, as well as nerve blocks and physical therapy when appropriate.

Experience has provided Dr. Mays and Dr. Schnapp an understanding of the physiology and psychology of pain. Pain may cause other problems such as sleep disorders or depression, and the goal is to treat all symptoms of pain so the suffering that comes with it is addressed. Over 12,000 patients seek their expertise every year because they are known for covering the span of most therapeutic modalities of pain treatment. They have even developed and patented rehabilitation devices to treat reflex sympathetic dystrophy, which can follow severe nerve damage. Other conditions they treat often include pain from cancer, ruptured discs, shingles, spinal stenosis, arthritis, nerve pain and fibromyalgia.

"I've always felt that if you listen carefully to a patient, they'll tell you both what's causing their pain and the best way to treat it," explained Dr. Mays.

Both doctors have conducted clinical trials and have published research results and articles in medical journals and books, and enjoy a reputation as leaders in the field. Dr. Kit Mays and Dr. Moacir Schnapp see a huge measure of success in celebrating the 25-year anniversary of a unique relationship, one that includes an outstanding practice partnership. The collaboration began in 1979 at the University of Tennessee and formally in 1983 when they moved into a tiny office on South Dudley across from the old Baptist Hospital. Dr. Mays, an anesthesiologist and Mid-South native, was the first Medical Director of the University of Tennessee Pain Clinic, the second of only two pain clinics in the

country at the time. Dr. Schnapp, whose background is as a neurologist, became the UT clinic's second medical director. They found they share an appreciation for the other's point of view.

"When we encounter a difficult case," Dr. Schnapp explained, "it helps to have another pair of eyes and ears." Another point of view is often important because there are so many different causes of pain. With the advances in diagnostics, they are finding it is becoming somewhat easier to prevent severe pain from developing. At this point, the cutting edge of pain relief is prevention, because pain can actually change the pathways to the nervous system, creating more pain.

"If you limit the amount of stimuli to the nervous system by numbing the appropriate nerves during a procedure," Dr. Schnapp continued, "the chances for chronic pain later on decrease substantially." However, while technical expertise and extensive clinical experience is valuable, the staff at Mays & Schnapp Pain Clinic knows there is no substitute for the personal touch when dealing with patients.

To learn more about the Mays and Schnapp Pain Clinic & Rehabilitation Center, call 901-747-0040.