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ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

November 19, 1984

~~Ms. Carolyn M. Cappel~~
~~Attorney at Law~~
25th Floor Terminal Tower
Cleveland, Ohio 44113-2241

Re: Mary Ellen Metz

Dear Ms. Cappel:

Mary Ellen Metz was examined on November 19, 1984 regarding an accident which occurred on October 18, 1983. This 19-year-old female informed me, in the presence of her counsel, that she was injured on October 18, 1983 when she was driving an automobile which was stopped when it was struck from behind by a second car. She recalled that she was not wearing seat belts and that she was "jarred" following the impact. Although she had no immediate symptoms, "several hours" later, she developed the onset of symptoms in her neck and "middle **back**".

Two days after the accident, she came under the care of Dr. DePasquale and was treated with ultrasound and "diapirnia". She initially stated that she received this treatment approximately two to three times a week for six months. She then recalled that in January of 1984, she was admitted to Warren General Hospital for approximately three to four weeks for symptoms referable to her mid back. She was treated with cervical traction and pads with "the impulse". Further clarification indicated that she received physical therapy until November of 1983 and that she was subsequently hospitalized in January of 1984. She then received further therapy until April of 1984. She was also examined by a neurosurgeon in April of 1984. She has not been examined by other physicians nor has she again been hospitalized.

At the time of this examination, Ms. Metz stated that she had symptoms with respect to her mid back. She had pain across the posterior aspect of her thoracic spine which was increased by housework, walking in the mall and "things like that". She indicated that she had attempted to play volleyball in the summer but was unable to do so. On occasion, she would also have pain in the posterior aspect of her cervical spine. There was no associated arm radiation.

November 19, 1984

Ms. Carolyn M. Cappel
Re: Mary Ellen Metz

Page two.

Her past medical history indicated no symptoms referable to her cervical or thoracic spine prior to her accident. There had been no new injuries.

Physical examination revealed a female of approximately her stated age who was of slender proportions. She stated that she was approximately 5 feet 6 inches tall and weighed 122 pounds. ~~She arose from the sitting position without difficulty, ambulated without limp and was able to ascend and descend the examining table in a normal fashion.~~

Examination of her cervical spine revealed normal cervical lordosis without evidence of paracervical or trapezius spasm. There was a full range of cervical flexion, extension, lateral rotation and lateral bending. There were no areas of localized tenderness to palpation.

Examination of her thoracic spine revealed no evidence of deformity or spasm. There were no areas of localized tenderness to palpation. There **was** no evidence of scoliosis. Neurological examination of her upper extremities revealed normal deep tendon reflexes, motor power and sensory perception.

Examination of her lumbosacral spine revealed increase in her lumbar lordosis without evidence of paraspinous spasm. There were no areas of localized tenderness to palpation in the lumbosacral area, sacroiliac joints or sciatic notches. Forward flexion could be accomplished such that her fingertips reached her toes and extension and lateral bending were performed normally. Heel walking and toe walking were performed without evidence of weakness or of pain.

Further examination revealed that sitting straight leg raising could be accomplished to the horizontal bilaterally. The deep tendon reflexes, motor power and sensory perception were within normal limits.

Radiographs of the cervical spine revealed no evidence of fracture, dislocation or disc space narrowing.

Radiographs of the thoracic spine revealed no evidence of fracture, dislocation or degenerative change.

The material forwarded to me has been reviewed and the "Surgeon's Report", prepared by Dr. DePasquale, indicates that Ms. Metz was first examined by him on October 20, 1983 and that no radiographs were obtained.

In his letter of January 20, 1984, he indicates that she "sustained an acute cervical, dorsal and lumbar strain with myositis". Apparently, the only abnormal physical finding was "range of motion impairment was seen mostly in the neck (cervical spine) with a 10 degree deficit in rotation to the right and left". He does not describe those symptoms or physical findings which may have necessitated his treatment on five subsequent occasions.

November 19, 1984

Ms. Carolyn M. Cappel
Re: Mary Ellen Metz

Page three.

In his report of April 27, 1984, Dr. DePasquale indicates that on April 17, 1984, there was a full range of motion of the entire spine as well as "palpable muscle spasm of the dorsal spine".

In his report of November 13, 1984, Dr. DePasquale describes his examination of November 6, 1984. Again, there was a full range of motion of the entire spine. He describes "palpable muscle spasm over the dorsal spine...and lumbar spine..." He indicates "continued weekly physical therapy consisting of manipulation, ultrasound and diathermy, with an extensive exercise program at home was advised".

Records from Warren General Hospital indicate Ms. Metz was in that facility between January 25, 1984 and February 17, 1984, approximately three months after the accident. Radiographs of the cervical, thoracic and lumbar spine were obtained but there is nothing to indicate that a CT-scan, bone-scan or myelogram were ordered. Ms. Metz was seen in consultation by Dr. Lazor, apparently an orthopaedic surgeon, for an unrelated knee problem. He apparently did not examine her spine.

Based on the information available to me, I believe that Ms. Metz was involved in a vehicular accident on October 18, 1983 and that she may ~~have sustained some injury to her cervical and thoracic spine. That this injury was of minor magnitude is evidenced by the paucity of physical findings described by Dr. DePasquale at the time of his first examination. Although these injuries may have required some treatment in the immediate post accident period, I do not believe that they necessitated the long hospitalization at Warren General Hospital.~~ As noted above, the diagnostic studies which were performed could have been performed as an out-patient and the patient could also have obtained physical therapy on an out-patient basis.

At the time of this examination, approximately 13 months after the accident, Ms. Metz continues to be symptomatic with respect to her thoracic spine, and to a lesser degree, her cervical spine. ~~Although she may have the symptoms which she describes, there is nothing on physical or radiographic examination to indicate that she has any permanent disability directly attributable to this accident.~~ I do not believe that the treatment program outlined by DePasquale in his letter of November 13, 1984 is indicated,

Very truly yours,

DB Brooks MD

Dennis B. Brooks, M.D.

DBB/anm