

# Minimizing Invasive Neurosurgery

Doctor Travels 1,000 Miles for Advanced NorthShore Technique

Healthcare  
for  
what's  
next.

By Brian Justice

**P**sychiatrist Charles Paddack, MD, knows a thing or two about delivering excellent patient care. In practice for more than 50 years and now semiretired, the 82-year-old Boulder, Colorado, resident faced a health challenge of his own recently, one that eventually led him to NorthShore.

Dr. Paddack suffered from potentially dangerous cerebrospinal fluid leakage due to what is called a tegmen tympani defect. A tiny hole at the base of his skull caused spinal fluid to drain into his ear, leading to chronic episodes of vertigo and nausea. Left untreated, it also can put a patient at risk for meningitis and seizures.

## MIND OVER MATTER

Traditional surgery to repair the fluid leak is long and highly invasive and has a slow recovery. Determined to find a better alternative, Dr. Paddack's research led him to NorthShore Neurological Institute Neurosurgeon Ricky Wong, MD.

"I came across an article Dr. Wong had

written about his own exclusive repair procedure, and I concluded that he would be the best guy to do this," Dr. Paddack recalled. "So, I reached out and Dr. Wong called me back right away, explained everything and answered all my questions." Within weeks, Dr. Paddack was on a flight from Colorado to Chicago.

"Usually, a 3-inch by 3-inch piece of the skull is removed through a large incision to stop the leakage, followed by a lot of pain, discomfort and often a long hospital stay," explained Dr. Wong, who holds an academic appointment at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine. "My version involves a much smaller incision that removes only a half-inch square section of the skull. The surgery takes about an hour and a one-night hospital stay."

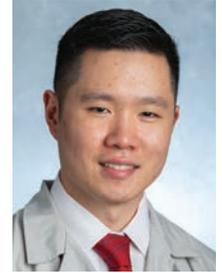
## OUTSTANDING OUTCOME

Dr. Paddack's surgery went flawlessly. Other than some initial tenderness around the incision site, he described his recovery as nearly pain-free. Within a few weeks, he resumed his

psychiatry practice in Boulder, and also was back to exercising and taking long walks with Sampson, his 120-pound Great Pyrenees mix.

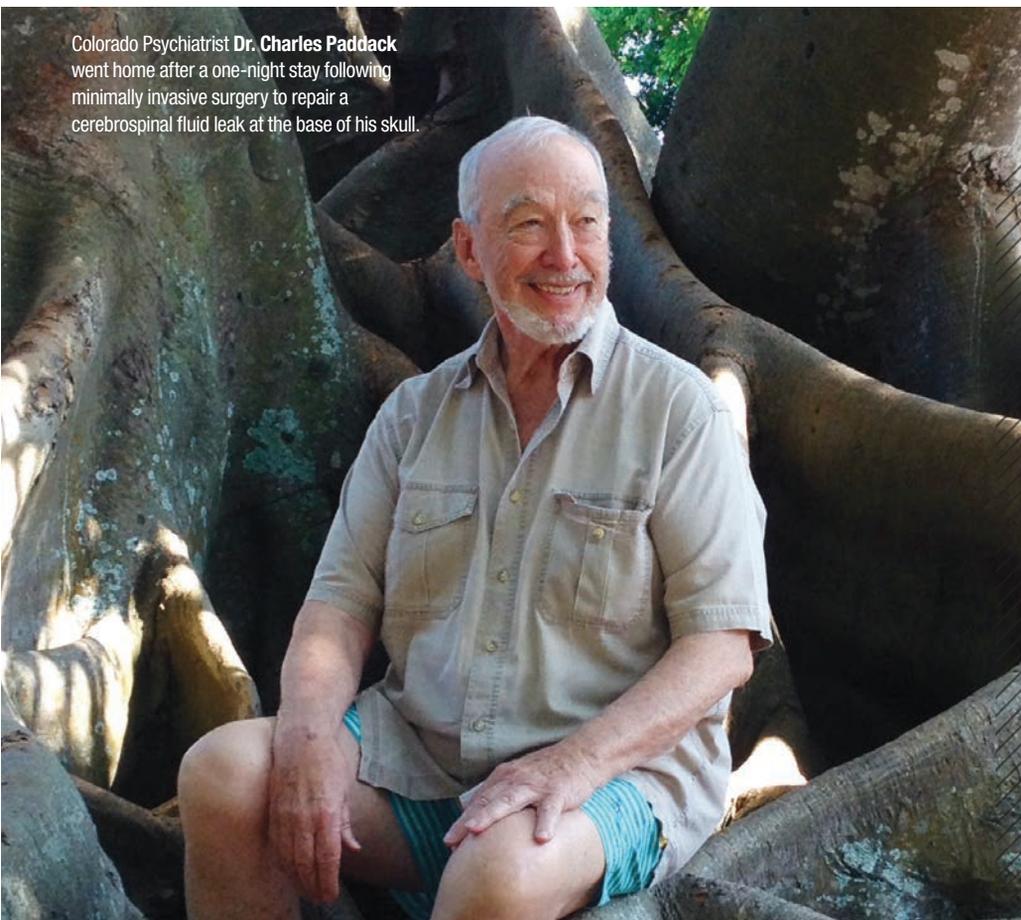
"He cured the hole in my head!" joked Dr. Paddack, who is a big Dr. Wong fan. "He's a very congenial and informative fellow. I had an uneventful recovery and hope his procedure becomes more common."

"Many surgeons believe that to access the base of the skull they have to open everything up to see clearly," added Dr. Wong. "I'm comfortable working in tight spaces and using an endoscope if need be to accommodate much smaller openings. If I can get a better outcome through a less invasive, faster surgery and a shorter recovery, I'm going to do it."



**Dr. Ricky Wong** is a trailblazer in minimally invasive neurosurgery.

Colorado Psychiatrist **Dr. Charles Paddack** went home after a one-night stay following minimally invasive surgery to repair a cerebrospinal fluid leak at the base of his skull.



## Expanding Exceptional Expertise

NorthShore's nationally renowned neurosurgeons take the lead on developing new minimally invasive techniques. And now, our subspecialists are seeing patients at NorthShore's newest location—Swedish Hospital on Chicago's North Side. Tune in to see our capabilities at [northshore.org/b17](http://northshore.org/b17). To make an appointment, please call (847) 492-5700 (Ext. 1288).

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