

FELLOWSHIP TESTIMONIAL

Dr James Rizkalla

After completing my complex spinal fellowship in the United States, I was very fortunate to join Dr. Choi at the Spine Ortho Clinic for a mini-fellowship. I sought out and was welcomed openly to join Dr. Choi for approximately 2 months.

The training I received from Dr. Choi was a fantastic complement to the traditionally open, complex training I received in the United States. During my time in Melbourne, I gained extremely valuable skills that I can now incorporate into my academic practice in Dallas, Texas. While at Spine Ortho Clinic, We routinely performed robotic surgery, unilateral biportal endoscopy (UBE), Cervical and lumbar disc arthroplasty, SI joint fusion, as well as countless Anterior-to-psoas lateral approaches. Dr. Choi is a very skilled and technical surgeon, routinely performing his own exposures for ALIF procedures, all the while educating and teaching along the way. There is ample discussion and learning in the operating room as well as in the clinic while evaluating and examining patients.

The location of his practice is fantastic— in a beautiful suburb south of Melbourne called Mornington. There are beaches, wineries, gyms, countless restaurants, and plenty of golf to enjoy while not in the operating room. Dr. Choi graciously allowed use of his company vehicle in order to commute and tour the city.

Overall, I felt this was an invaluable time in my training. I feel it has been instrumental in shaping how I can approach spinal pathology and think outside of the box. Dr. Choi has become one of my many mentors where I routinely ask him for advice and wisdom on cases. At some point I am hopeful to return back to Melbourne for another MIS refresher and enjoy the scenery Melbourne has to offer!