

# Covid Castaways Podcast

## Episode 2: From Healthy to a Train Wreck

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### SUMMARY KEYWORDS

vaccine, neuropathies, people, vaccine injury, dose, symptoms, day, treatment, doctors, tinnitus, sensations, neurologist, thought, nurse, reaction, mandate, injured, vaccinations, struggling, dr

### SPEAKERS

Devin Russell & Shaun B.

#### Devin Russell 00:00

Today on the COVID castaways podcast we have Sean B. He's a nurse from New York. He has been injured by the COVID vaccinations. He's taken two doses of the Pfizer shots and he has significant neurological issues amongst other things. We'll discuss his situation before COVID. What prompted him to get the shots and how he's doing now and what treatments may be helping, and what he's experiencing. ... What was your life like before the COVID vaccine injury?

#### Shaun B. 00:32

So I'm, I'm a 51 year old nurse, and prior to receiving the vaccines, I was very healthy. I had no pre existing conditions, no chronic medical conditions. I was not on any medications. I was very active, fully employed, went to work every day love my job. Walked my dogs every day, went on hikes outside New York City. So it was pretty robust life, enjoying every day. Then December 29th, rolled around of 2020, I was early in the lineup to receive the vaccines because we worked in the medical profession, so we had priority to get the vaccination. And I had actually react a reaction right after my first dose. 'Had a reaction' within like 15-20 minutes, so I had 'it' right away, I got it in my right arm. And after about 15 minutes, they make you wait. And I said to the nurse, you know, I feel like strange sensations up and down my arm like a, like warm, cold sensations and a little bit of tingle. I said that doesn't doesn't feel right. I never had that with an injection before. Okay, maybe this, you know, these are new. Maybe that's just the way it is. So I waited another 15 minutes, and then they sent me home. That evening, the sensations continued up and down my right arm and by the next day, it was spreading into my armpit and my right chest area and it was like these warm, cold sensations. I had this sensation like I was sweating under my armpit and I would keep feeling there and there was no water or anything but it was just like the strange sensation. Then about day four, I had some tingle up the side of the right side of my face. And then I had some eye irritation and I didn't associate it with the vaccine, but I thought it was really strange. I was waking up in the middle of night feeling like something was sticking in my eye like a foreign body thing. And I went to see two eye doctors for that and they looked at my eye and they said, oh, there's nothing in there. It's totally fine, but here's some eyedrops. And all these sensations continued, I saw a neurologist at a hospital in New York, somebody very experienced in neuropathies in fact, and he did a test an EMG test on my arm said everything was normal and in his own opinion,

which I don't know what it was based on, because all of this is new. He thought that if it went away, I should get the second dose.

**Devin Russell** 03:39

So in time it did it did go away after a couple weeks?

**Shaun B.** 03:43

And to 11 days this all the symptoms subsided and went away. They just dissipated.

**Devin Russell** 03:50

And well, did you need to get the second dose basically to keep your keep your job?

**Shaun B.** 03:56

No, there was no mandate at that time, but I thought you know, I mean, I can't I also can't blame people too much, but I but I also thought it was weird that if you have a neurological reaction to something after dose one who advises you to get a second dose of something. So ...

**Devin Russell** 04:16

That is what I'm hearing a lot with other vaccines.

**Shaun B.** 04:20

And it makes no medical sense. I mean, even if you don't know something and it's all new, I mean it traditionally in medicine, I work in medicine, if I gave somebody penicillin, and they had a huge rash outbreak, I'm not going to give them penicillin again, right how we practice medicine, so I have no idea what they were basing this on. But, you know, stupid me, I just heeded the advice of somebody who I thought knew more than me and I charged ahead and got the second dose thinking I needed to get full immunity to this right. Terrible, terrible, terrible idea.

**Devin Russell** 05:00

I'm sorry. Yeah, I'm sorry, it didn't work out for you. We'll get into some of your more extensive injuries from the second dose in a second. Just want to ask you though, did you have any pre existing conditions? Before the doses? ... What was that, Sciatica?

**Shaun B.** 05:17

Yeah 'Sciatica', from bending over, playing a sport. I injured my back in my right leg. I had surgery for it and everything was back to normal, but I had nothing else. I had no diabetes, I was not obese, I have nothing, nothing. I was not on any medications. I was 100% healthy. Perfect hearing, perfect vision.

**Devin Russell** 05:46

What have you experienced after your second dose now? Because I know you've had some ...

**Shaun B.** 05:52

It was January 19th. I remember the dates. They're like, tattooed in my brain because it was so life changing. I went and I stood in line and I was a little bit apprehensive, but I was like, okay, you know, here we go. I got it in my left arm this time. Ironically, the first few days I just had arm pain. What you hear from everybody else this traditional, like unusual pain, like more so that you get then you get from other vaccines. So I just had like, arm pain in my left radiating to my back and my neck. By about day

three, four all the neuropathies or paraesthesias on my right side began to flare again. So I had the numbness tingling, up and down my arm tingling into my face. My eye stuff came back. I had like a prickling sensation in my throat. I called I sent a message to the same neurologist telling him I'm having all these symptoms and I also think I'm hearing some ringing in my ear. So he calls me and he says oh, I think you know, it's just transient and it should come down. And I remember saying like, I don't think so this seems really pronounced and, and you know, quite scary. I never had any of this with a vaccine before especially like the throat prickling and feeling like a kind of tightness in my throat. So I thought okay, you know, I'm a nurse, I'll power through it and see, but by January 30th I was starting to have like really wild blood pressure swings and tachycardia, fast heartbeat. And the fast heartbeat would go like all through the night not like you have anxiety and you just get some palpitations. This is like where my heart rate is like, up to like 110-120 and it goes on for hours. --- DR - While you're asleep? --- Yes, waking me up from sleep and then I got a terrible headache, so on January 30th I ended up in an emergency room in Pennsylvania visiting my mother and I kept telling the ER doctor I'm like I'm I'm you know familiar with these vaccines. I think I'm having a strange reaction. I said I'm having intense headache ringing in my ears. I went there because my blood pressure was like 180 over 120. You know I have normal blood pressure before and I my heart rates always like 50s low so it was really unusual for me you know to have all this all of a sudden. But I said I'm having all these symptoms I had also like severe stomach pain, so he ran me through a CAT scan they saw I had like inflammation in my abdomen. But they didn't know what it was what it was causing it. So he's like we don't know and he's like, I don't think you're having a reaction. It's not you know what we typically see, but I'm like it's only January these are new, how would you know what you typically see? You know, I'm like I'm familiar with them because I kind of work around research and you know vaccinations so I'm like I think this is pretty clear all of this started after the vaccine, but he kept dismissing me and he sent me home with ibuprofen and then from there I just kept getting worse.

**Devin Russell 09:35**

Have any of your doctors given you any ... any credence to it being COVID vaccine injury?

**Shaun B. 09:42**

So in the beginning, so after that, like I was my ringing in my ears got so bad, so bad like it was suicidal ringing. It was like very high. I was on the bathroom floor, many days crying because I just not could not believe I couldn't watch TV. I couldn't hear, I couldn't sleep and I was going around New York City, visiting all these ear, nose, and throat doctors telling them, this all started after the vaccine. Not one of them wanted to acknowledge that. They're all like, possibly coincidental, you probably had like high frequency hearing loss. If it is from the vaccine, there's nothing we can do any way. I got all this lame, what I thought were lame excuses and I was very frustrated because I'm like, this is clearly from the vaccine. I don't have loud noise exposure. I never had any hearing problems. You know, I also have all these other symptoms on top of it, right?

**Devin Russell 10:49**

So seems to make some good common sense there, yeah, that it was probably the vaccine if it happened right afterwards, and you're having all these weird problems all of a sudden.

**Shaun B. 10:59**

Exactly going from, like 0 to 60 going from healthy to a train wreck, you know in a few days. So, you know, side effects mimicking each other after dose one and two, which is really, you know, bizarre, right? It like makes sense if I had piracies on the right, went away, got a vaccine on the left, and the

same things are occurring on the right, that's unusual. Right? A pattern (DR - Should be a red flag.) As a medical professional, I was very frustrated. I couldn't get people to, to see it, what I was seeing and so they would just be like, well, here's a paper on how to learn to live with tinnitus. Here's a paper ... Here's some Xanax to help you deal with the anxiety around tinnitus. I'm like ok, but what about the right sided headaches, the brain fog, the tachycardia, the inability to sleep? You know all these ... the high blood pressure swing? Like, what about all that? I'm like that ... I still have all that. They didn't have an answer for me, so I just kept going, trying to find doctor after doctor to, to get answers and I guess the more I looked, the more I got nowhere and got worse.

**Devin Russell** 12:28

Sorry to hear that. That sounds like a very frustrating thing. I've experienced that a couple times in my life as well, but you're a nurse, so you think they would take you a little more seriously and listen to a little bit more. Just because you're not even, you're not a lay person and now we know a thing or two.

**Shaun B.** 12:46

Yeah, that's I thought and then suddenly your world changes. You go from being the medical professional, to being the patient and then you realize it's a whole other world you're in when you're the patient and you're faced with these, you know, world renowned professionals.

**Devin Russell** 13:07

Yeah, I don't think they understand it if they haven't been through it as a patient themselves. I mean, you kind of, yeah, you kind of ...

**Shaun B.** 13:14

Like, I'm like, How can you dismiss this? Like, what is your training and experience in vaccine reactions? And I can tell you that most doctors, I **don't know, any medical school where they have a course in vaccine reaction.** I'm a nurse practitioner, I never had a training in this other than the traditional anaphylaxis. We don't know what happens with vaccine reactions and how to necessarily treat them unless they're the clear, clear ones that, you know, we know like, you know, Guillain-Barré or transverse myelitis. But these are insidious ones. Nobody knows.

**Devin Russell** 13:53

Yeah. Yeah and that's part of the problem with the bunch of this right now. A lot are having issues of finding somebody to give them credence, and I'm giving them a treatment as well. That's a whole other thing. So have any of your doctors reported your injury or have you reported your injury anywhere?

**Shaun B.** 14:12

I reported my injuries, all of them to VAERS and to Pfizer. I have heard, I have at ... Pfizer has asked me for information several times, but I am hesitant to give them information because they in turn offer nothing for you. Right, so they just want to gather all the data, but they're not obligated to help you in any way. Right? So I kind of feel frustrated about that. Like I want to give them everything, but I I want it under the condition where they actually offer some help or assistance to me. It's not a one way street. **But none of my doctors today that I know have have logged my symptoms in VAERS. Not one, of many.**

**Devin Russell** 15:07

Which is shocking based on what you have explained with your reactions to the vaccines, it seems quite odd since it was it was due to them, and they still don't give any credence to that. So you have to

wonder about how many people are really being gaslit over their vaccine injuries right now, the COVID vaccine injuries. Do you have more time for a couple more questions?

**Shaun B.** 15:31

Yeah, I mean, yes, absolutely.

**Devin Russell** 15:34

Did you want to say something right there?

**Shaun B.** 15:37

Even today, you know, I've seen many specialist top specialists, and their first inclination, which surprises me, is to immediately dismiss the association. Instead of going the opposite direction is, let's work backwards. Let's look at this is likely associated and then try to disprove that it's not.

**Devin Russell** 16:06

Yeah, that would be a better process.

**Shaun B.** 16:08

Do you know what I mean? Like, how are you ... on what are you basing this that there's ... there's there's no correlation? But you know, like, based on what?

**Devin Russell** 16:20

I think they're basing it on what they've seen from other vaccines in the past that are different technology, (SB - Exactly), different virus ... Yeah. Blah blah blah. Yeah.

**Shaun B.** 16:29

Exactly. So there's nothing they're basing it on. It's just I don't know, they can't answer the question when I asked them that and then they get ... But because I work in research, right and I know all about determining causality and you have to work from the foundation that this is possibly related, and then work, do your investigation to look to see if you can disprove that it's not. That's how I ... I don't just walk in and somebody says I have X, Y and Z and say, oh, sorry, nope, not related. You know, without due diligence and investigation. One doctor top doctor in Manhattan said to me, "Oh, well, there's no evidence or research that the vaccine causes any of this." I'm like, based on what are 100 years of research and mRNA vaccines? Of course, there's no literature on it, it's new! It's just absolutely astounding to me.

**Devin Russell** 17:33

It's, it's all going to come to a head at some point, I think. Unfortunately, with the vaccinations being rolled out for children and everything. I think there's gonna be a lot of angry mothers that their children are COVID vaccine injured. We'll see what happens at that point, but at this ... at this moment in time it seems like just a lot of gaslighting and a lot of narrow minded thinking about something that's brand new, like you said.

**Shaun B.** 17:57

I just talked to a another ... a colleague of mine who has similar symptoms to me, and she was telling me about how she seen several neurologist in California and they just immediately blamed it on anxiety.

And now her test results are coming back positive for, you know, autoimmune diseases related to neuropathy and now they're suddenly changing their tune.

**Devin Russell** 18:26

Yes, yeah, that's also another problem I've had in my past where they need to see it in a test, otherwise, they're not going to use their brain to connect the dots so much.

**Shaun B.** 18:39

'They don't deal' well with subjective data.

**Devin Russell** 18:43

Right. Let me also ask you, have there been any treatments you've done that have been helpful for you so far?

**Shaun B.** 18:52

So basically, as I was left to spiral out of control health wise I, I ... I progressed over the summer of 2021 and I developed positional tachycardia, intractable insomnia, the tinnitus remained. I developed neuropathies all over the right side of my face, hands, feet, all over my body. Burning sensations, prickling sensations, stabbing sensations. I had positive Tilt Table tests. I've had skin biopsies that showed reduced nerve fibers, so I really pushed the system a lot over the summer and I did finally find a neurologist who was very open to the idea of it being a vaccine injury, because she actually had some side effects herself. (DR - There you go.) Yeah. So, she was the first one to recognize that this might be related to like pseudo motor small fiber as a possible causality for my symptoms. But since then, I've struggled because a lot of people don't know what to do, right? There's no diet, we don't have a diagnosed illness with a with a treatment, right? So it's not like, oh, you have prostate cancer, this is what we do for prostate cancer, right? It's not cut ... it's not that clear. So basically, we fit, you know, given that this is like inflammatory or possible poly neuropathy related from the vaccine. They've want ... the neurologist wanted to try immunoglobulin therapy, IV. And that is one of the treatments that, you know, they do for people who have like, you know, Guillain-Barré Syndrome, or these other neurological side effects from vaccines. So I did start that treatment. (DR -And how's that going so far.) So I didn't do very well in the beginning with it. I had a lot of side effects to it, unfortunately. Which is just ... I'm either unlucky, or the vaccine has made me ultra sensitive to medicines all of a sudden. So I did one course, I did two courses of IV therapy and after the second one, even though I had side effects, my neuropathies disappeared for like, 12 days.

**Devin Russell** 21:49

Wow. 'Nice to have' a little relief.

**Shaun B.** 21:53

Yeah. So go ahead.

**Devin Russell** 21:56

No, I was just gonna say nice to have a little relief, even if it's for 12 days. That's a good sign.

**Shaun B.** 22:00

Yeah. So I was surprised the first few days, I thought, oh, this is anecdotal. You know, maybe it's just, you know, disappearing. But after about, I would say into the 14th day, the symptoms started to creep

back again. So, I still have the tinnitus, which is, I think, now likely permanent. The neuropathy seemed to improve with this treatment and I will switch to a different kind of immunotherapy today. So instead of doing it through the IV, which gave me phlebitis, which is inflammation of the vein, I will do it subcutaneous now. Which should reduce the side effects. So now we'll see how that works, in terms of abating my symptoms.

**Devin Russell** 22:52

Is that typically not as strong or intense?

**Shaun B.** 22:56

Just different because if you inject it into your body fat instead of directly into your veins and for some reason, my veins didn't like, like it.

**Devin Russell** 23:09

Well, yeah, I know, a lot of, a lot of the vaccine injured have issues with their vascular system so maybe it's related to that.

**Shaun B.** 23:19

If that was the cause of why I didn't react very well.

**Devin Russell** 23:24

Well I hope that treatment goes well. Are there any other treatments you have your eye on for the future?

**Shaun B.** 23:29

Um, I think that if this doesn't fully work, I think the next phase would be apheresis or plasmapheresis. Which is ... which makes a lot more sense to me because that is a cleaning, kind of, cleaning out of your immune system. Where IVIG is kind of flooding your immune system with other ... with a whole pool of antibodies to kind of tamp down things and to kind of modulate your immune system.

**Devin Russell** 24:05

Yeah, yeah, I know about the apheresis well. I'm about to do it myself in five days for my long haul COVID, so I'll definitely let you know how that goes. It's called EBO2, if you're familiar with that.

**Shaun B.** 24:20

I have done ... I have tried that. Two cycles of that.

**Devin Russell** 24:24

Did it go alright? Or did you not notice much?

**Shaun B.** 24:28

No, I had a lot of relief from it, in fact, but it was transient. You have to keep doing it.

**Devin Russell** 24:36

Yeah, I'm gonna have to make a couple trips to this place, I think, but I hope I have the at least the transient benefit from it like you did. Just a couple more questions if you have more time. What's your

opinion on what's going on in the United States currently regarding COVID vaccine rules and mandates, after all you've been through obviously?

**Shaun B.** 25:01

So my take is I ... I'm still very pro vaccine in general. I think I always struggled with this vaccine mandate because it is emergency use authorization, right? So even though they say Pfizer is fully approved, it's not really in the traditional sense, right? If something goes wrong, and **this was always my fear even when I was standing in line to get the vaccine, if something goes wrong, you're on your own.** (DR - Yep.) **There is no cavalry coming to your rescue medically. You are in, in a very small world, where finding people to help you and care for you is very challenging.** And the thing is I knew that, as a researcher, that, you know, with everything, there's always going to be some injured people, with every medicine, right. And I know that even if it's like one to two to three, or whatever percent. It's a real sucky place to be. And it's one of the failures of our research system is that we don't have enough support for people, for this for the cases of people where things go wrong.

**Devin Russell** 26:25

We need more support and a better system at calculating these injuries as well.

**Shaun B.** 26:30

Right. **It's one thing to mandate vaccines, it's another when you have no mandate to help people who are injured.** (DR - That's a great line.) 'There is no' help for people like me. We had to start our own organization to try to get our own research going because we've been pretty much sidelined and abandoned by by our own government.

**Devin Russell** 26:57

Yeah, it's a travesty what's going on. It just ... acknowledging these injuries and trying to help these people would ...

**Shaun B.** 27:07

No, I never, I never ... you really literally cannot talk about it. The media ignores it, sweeps it under the rug. I've written to politicians, just explaining my situation and my struggle, have not never not received an answer today. And I'm like, just puzzled. As a scientist, as a nurse, I never imagined such a situation in in my life.

**Devin Russell** 27:38

Yeah, it's amazing. I think there's just a large group of people that are scared to speak against, you know, the vaccines in any way because they will be ostracized attacked, maybe their livelihood will be taken away from them.

**Shaun B.** 27:56

In my opinion, that's anti-science, right, because reactions happen. To say a product is 100% safe is a lie. I'm not saying that they're not safe for the majority of people, but there's ... nothing is 100% safe. Somebody can take an aspirin and have anaphylaxis. It's a ... it's science, that is science. **To deny that reactions happen is anti-science and I think that's an issue when politics has hijacked science.**

**Devin Russell** 28:30

Yes. That's definitely what's going on right now and crony capitalism, and that all of that ... those issues as well are involved. In knowing what you know, now, what would you have done differently? I might be a stupid question, but ...

**Shaun B.** 28:47

It's always hard to say because, you know, at the time, I probably, I probably would have been, if ... I would not have done it for one obviously. If I knew what I know now, I would not have gotten the second dose. (DR - Right.) For sure.

**Devin Russell** 28:57

But would have went on with the first and probably would have had a little bit of immunity right with from the first and just would of ...

**Shaun B.** 29:10

Yes and I think maybe I would have waited a bit longer to to make my decision. I think there was a lot of social pressure and pushing and fear mongering in the beginning, (DR - Especially in your profession.) Not a lot of informed consent and fully informed consent.

**Devin Russell** 29:13

I don't think we still have it yet.

**Shaun B.** 29:42

No, we don't and that's also anti-science and anti-research. I mean, I understand the other side I understand the need to end a pandemic. I understand the need, you know, for for mandates under certain circumstances. But I also understand the need to do things correctly where you protect people.

**Devin Russell** 30:08

Yeah, you just have to be honest and open about the situation and not try and, you know, stuff things down, so you can promote your narrative and get everybody vaccinated. It's just ... let's just be honest and open and accurate about the information. It doesn't seem to be the case at the moment. Also, do you have any comments towards people considering getting the vaccination or considering getting their kids vaccinated? What would you say to them?

**Shaun B.** 30:40

I never tell anybody what to do. I can give people as much factual information as I can, but I try to avoid doing that. I think everyone needs to weigh the risks versus the benefits. I think everyone needs to look into the risks versus the benefits. I think the risks and benefits need to be explicitly available to people, so they know they're making an informed decision. And I think that they need to do what they think is best for them. Right, but I do think people need to be fully informed, right, I think they need to know that under what certain circumstances they're things can go wrong and if things go wrong, you know, getting help from the government or the manufacturers is, is pretty much zero.

**Devin Russell** 31:39

And even the in the medical field, it seems like in a lot of cases.

**Shaun B.** 31:43

In a lot of cases. You'd have to really struggle hard to find people who are willing and open to helping.

**Devin Russell** 31:52

Yeah, and I was lucky when I had, I contracted long haul Covid because I had already been through Lyme Disease, so I had arrived at those people that were willing and open to help me so ... but it took a number of years to find those people. So I can't imagine somebody never having to deal with a health issue before and now struggling to find somebody to help them with potential Covid vaccine injury. But you got to you got to fight and find that find those people that will help. Anything else you'd like to add that we haven't discussed?

**Shaun B.** 32:29

I think we've covered some pretty good ground here.

**Devin Russell** 32:33

Yeah, no, it was, uh ... thank you very much for your feedback and doing this interview with me. I think it was very helpful for anybody considering a vaccine or is vaccine injured. And I appreciate your insight Shaun.

**Shaun B.** 32:50

Yeah, thank you for having me on and allowing me to share my story.

**Devin Russell** 32:56

Yeah, you're the first person I've interviewed for the COVID vaccine injured. So there's going to be more to come. Unfortunately, there's, I know a lot of a lot of you guys that are injured by the vaccines.

**Shaun B.** 33:08

There are. We have quite a number. I guess I would just say that we, in closing that we have, you know, in the early days when I was struggling, and couldn't find anybody medically to help me and, you know, encountering like many missed opportunities where doctors could have intervened and possibly, you know, abated a lot of my symptoms. I set, we set up, I reached out and set up groups online to find other people because I was feeling alone and afraid. And it was shocking to me. This was in February, but in January, February. By March, April, I had hundreds of people coming to the groups. I set up a group for tinnitus initially, which is you know, really a debilitating symptom for people. Because people will look at me and they say, oh, but you look so fine. You look so healthy, right? But neuropathies you don't see. Tinnitus you don't see. My brain is constantly hissing and ringing 24/7 a day and it's exhausting. And the neuropathies are always there stinging, burning, tingling, numb, patchy numbness, you know. It's not things you can see, right, like a black eye or I don't have, you know, I'm not bleeding from places, but finding those groups and connecting with people has been life saving for me.

**Devin Russell** 34:47

Epecially when you think you're all alone on an island and no one's giving credence to your injury. It's, it's important to speak with others who are in the same situation and may offer us some ideas for, for improvement as well.

**Shaun B.** 35:02

We were able to share our experiences. Now we share our test results and lab results, we share different treatments we try. And I mean, that's all we have for the moment is we have each other.

**Devin Russell** 35:17

Yeah, when you're a patient in crisis struggling, you have to do what you have to do, despite how the, you know, the medical medical field views it. You know, they're not in the situation you're in. So it's not as urgent to them as it is to you. You can't wait for the research to come out necessarily to make moves.

**Shaun B.** 35:41

But 'there is' a funny cartoon that is circulated around and it's a doctor speaking to a patient and he says what you have isn't serious, it would only be serious if I had it.

**Devin Russell** 35:53

Right. That's a great one. Well, thank you for your time. I appreciate it, Shaun. I hope you feel better from your treatment that you're about to get and I hope you continue to improve.

**Shaun B.** 36:10

Alright, thank you so much, and hopefully we'll chat again.

**Devin Russell** 36:15

Yes. Yeah, when you're when you're all better. That'd be great to have a recovery interview.

**Shaun B.** 36:21

Let's hope for that.

**Devin Russell** 36:23

Alright, thanks Shaun.