Back Pain Appears Following Nail Puncture Case Study

A 58-year old lawyer presents in the emergency room with headache, irritability, generalized muscle pain and uncontrollable back spasms. He has become very restless and worried because he has had the back spasms all through his court case that afternoon and they became extremely painful.

In his history, the lawyer states that he has a very busy practice. He is on medication for high blood pressure (beta blocker) and has mild asthma. He injured himself about 10 days earlier, puncturing his left arm with a nail from an old barn he is tearing. The wound has produced moderate quantities of pus, but he has been keeping it clean. When asked, he did not remember having a tetanus shot since he was a kid.

The wound was sampled for microscopic examination and culture. The back appears to have very tight contractions and spasms. The patient is in obvious agonizing pain.

1. What is your diagnosis here?
2. What is the proper treatment of this problem?
3. How could this have been prevented?