

Mountain-Sized Man Pain

By Dr. Derek Conte

October, 2024



(Included image is anonymous and does not belong to the patient here described. It is intended only to illustrate the appearance of DJD: degenerative joint disease)

Big Joe is six feet, seven inches and weighs in at 280 lbs (after having lost 30) and his frame casts a big shadow. He was a US Marine as a teenager, played college basketball and baseball, and later became a NYC Cop in the South Bronx in his twenties. In his thirties he was injured on the job, fracturing his L4, L5, and Sacrum in the late 1980's and retired from the NYPD on disability. A laminectomy procedure of L4 and L5 followed a decade later. After that, he went to law school and became very successful there as well.

Big Joe is 67-years-old now, and has been in tremendous hip pain for six years (the pain caused him to favor his left side too much and he suffered a left ankle fracture several years ago). His orthopedist said his right hip joint was bone-on-bone and recommended a total hip replacement procedure.

But there was an obstacle to the surgery. Big Joe suffers from congestive heart failure and has a pacemaker/defibrillator implant in his chest. His cardiologist said he had a 35% chance of not waking up from the surgery... quite a history. This is when Big Joe came to my attention.

Bone-on-bone pain is one of the worst kinds of pain of all. It is intense, deeply aching, and it never goes away, day or night, causing restlessness and shutting down any desire to be really active. Walking even short distances was a decision to be made by Big Joe.

On our first visit, he reported a constant pain level of 7 out of 10. That number has to be considered in light of his background. Guys who are used to ignoring pain will usually give a lower pain number than others will.

The exam showed Big Joe weighed 145lbs on the left and 135lbs on the right when done simultaneously on bi-lateral scales. He also suffered from significant postural distortion. Further examination revealed a badly-rotated pelvis, severely restricted left sacroiliac joint, a right tibia (shin bone) malpositioned relative to the femur (thigh bone), and a badly-rotated C2 segment in the top of the neck.

We adjusted all of these areas manually. The sound could be heard and felt by both of us and Big Joe sagged on the table and took a deep breath. He got up and walked around and reported a pain level of 3 out of 10, his posture neutralized and his bi-lateral scales came in at 135lbs on the right and 135lbs on the left. We repeated the adjustments two days later. He left to go home in another state a few days after that.

I called him after one week to check on him. He was playing a round of golf, reporting a 1 out of 10 pain level. A week after that, he is still reporting 1 out of 10 pain level as of this writing. It is wonderful to see how just two adjustments could make such a difference in someone's life. Of course, Big Joe still needs to be looked after and continue his adjustments!

Dr. Derek Conte is co-founder of Chiropractic Specialists at 1154 Concord Road in Smyrna. For questions, call 404-784-6008. For more articles, info, photos, go to: drderekconte.com