

By Dr. Derek Conte

Sally called the office to arrange a new patient visit for her husband, Matthew, who was suffering intractable, sometimes unbearable, shoulder and arm pain. Matthew was originally seen for this problem by his primary physician six years ago who referred him to an orthopedist. An MRI revealed arthritis and damage to the rotator cuff. A cortisone shot was administered but over time the pain kept worsening.

Matthew was feeling discouraged. He wanted help but was cautious of surgical intervention and his job as a superintendant to a big construction company demanded little time off, long hours and intense mental and physical strain. So Matthew did what so many hard-working men do: He sucked it up and kept working despite the increasing pain. How many men does that describe? Lots!

Three months ago Matthew visited another orthopedist who wanted a new MRI, which would have been useful, but insurance would not cover the MRI unless Matthew went to physical therapy for four to eight weeks first. Though it might have helped, Matthew didn't do the physical therapy.

The level of pain Matthew experienced hadn't allowed a good night's sleep in two years, taking a big toll on his endurance and mental concentration. He even found the simple act of putting on a coat an excruciating experience which, he said, sometimes brought him to his knees, while making faces that worried his wife, Sally.

Matthew ultimately entered our office presenting with neck, shoulder, blade, triceps and forearm pain with "pins & needles" and numbness throughout, down to the hand. Cervical range-of-motion was painful and greatly reduced. A simple orthopedic test could not be fully performed due to the pain. His right leg measured one-and-one-half inches shorter than the left in the supine (face-up) position and he weighed seven pounds more on the left side than the right using bilateral scales. Sensation and muscle strength tests were below normal compared to the uninvolved side.

There were spinal rotations and fixations at various levels of the neck and back which we identified and corrected with specific chiropractic adjustments to those areas and nothing more. Matthew's legs immediately became balanced, his range of motion increased without pain, and his weight-distribution improved by almost 50%. Most importantly, Matthew felt immense relief before he got off the table.

On his second visit, Matthew reported he'd had his first good, uninterrupted sleep in two years, his pain level and function had improved by 98% and added, "My ability to work, concentrate and communicate ideas have improved noticeably. This has been a life-changing experience in every way!"

Many think chiropractors are "doctors of the bones", but we are doctors of the nervous system; the controlling system of the entire human body. Visit a chiropractor in your neighborhood soon.

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