

## Orthopedic Surgery Second Opinion - Extended Written Report

*Date: 2022-12-15*

*Patient: John Doe*

### **Discussion:**

After a careful review of the submitted medical record, it is my current medical opinion that your ongoing lower lumbar symptomatology, and chronic degenerative change of the lumbar spine, are both causally related to injuries incurred in 2006, while employed by the United States military. In specific, the medical record clearly substantiates that a significant injury was imparted to the lumbar spine, as a consequence of your work activities, resulting in a significant loss of range of motion of the lumbar spine, necessitating a 20% impairment rating, as detailed in the 2006 Department of Veterans Affairs summary. Furthermore, although the medical record only indicates that a lumbar sprain was diagnosed at that time, it's likely that a significant discogenic versus facetogenic injury occurred, resulting in ongoing degeneration of the lumbar spine, and the development of chronic lumbar symptomatology. This would serve to explain the radiographic degenerative disease noted on a recent MRI of the lumbar spine, which is clearly not age-related, but due to injuries incurred to the lumbar region as a consequence of the 2006 work-related injury. This is based upon the epidemiology of disk and facet degeneration, in a young individual, such as yourself. I therefore sharply disagree with the findings of the second medical report, who states in 2014 that your current lumbar symptomatology is unrelated to the 2006 work injury, and that the degenerative disease noted on a 2012 MRI of the lumbar spine is age-related, and not a consequence of injuries incurred in 2006.

In summary, as stated to a high degree of medical probability, using the Department of Veterans Affairs guides, there exists an ongoing 20% impairment of the lower lumbar spine, as originally noted in 2006, which should not have been altered in 2014. Furthermore, as your ongoing lumbar symptomatology has worsened, one might consider this to be a permanent aggravation of a pre-existing work-related condition, which according to the Department of Veterans Affairs, necessitates an additional impairment rating.

### **Recommendations:**

I would strongly recommend that you seek additional medical treatment for your ongoing lumbar symptomatology under the aegis of the Department of Veterans Affairs. I would also recommend that you request a medical appeal with the Department of Veteran Affairs such that you can restore your impairment rating, or in fact increase it, due to a worsening of your lumbar symptomatology and degeneration of the lumbar spine.

### **References:**

AMA guides to the evaluation of permanent impairment, 6th edition  
Department of Veterans Affairs impairment rating system

The sciatic syndrome, HF Farfan

Low back pain, a scientific and clinical overview, JN Weinstein

*Electronically Signed by: , MD on 12/15/2022 12:48:43 AM*

*Board Certified:*

*American Board of Orthopedic Surgery*

*Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada*

*Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery*

*Midwestern University*

*Phoenix Arizona*

*Orthopaedic Surgery*

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