

Keith A.'s Virtual MSK Member Story

How HealthJoy's Virtual MSK Care Program Treated a Painful Bulging Disc Injury

For Keith A., an action sports enthusiast, the day he injured his back seemed like any other. He had to bend down and lift a heavy box — a normal movement to perform an everyday task — but his lower back had other plans.

"It all started with a simple, everyday movement," he said. "And then a few days later I significantly aggravated the area while wakeboarding. It wasn't great."

Keith's injury, a bulging L5 disc, caused pain and distress. This injury was located in the lumbar spine, an area which spans from the waist to the top of the hips, according to [a world leader in advanced spine surgery](#).

Bulging discs in this area (vertebrae L1-L5) can lead to symptoms such as leg pain, numbness in legs, feet or toes, acute lower back pain, and other symptoms. In fact, about 90% of bulging discs occur in this area, causing pain in the nerves that radiate down the sciatic nerve.

Slow Progress

For over a year, Keith lived with pain that left him unable to sit and relegated him to working from a yoga mat. Before trying HealthJoy's Virtual MSK program, he participated in in-person physical therapy appointments, but the sessions never seemed to improve his condition.

"It used the McKenzie Method, which is very singularly focused, where there are specific exercises aimed at pushing the disc back into place," he said. So it addressed the pain and the acute injury, but did nothing to address reintroducing mobility, along with muscular and nerve therapy.

Although the exercises were successful in stabilizing the joint, the relief was short-lived. Frustrated and uncomfortable, Keith decided to embark on a 12-week journey with HealthJoy's MSK program, and his coach, [Jeremy Baber](#).

"I wasn't in constant pain, however, I would reaggravate the area doing normal activities," he said.

"But after three weeks in the program, I gained stability in my core, noticed improvement in my lower back, and achieved normal range of motion and mobility."

Back in Action

From the initial interview to twice-weekly video check-ins and occasional form checks with Jeremy, Keith says the virtual program felt surprisingly personal.

"Even though it's through an app, I was able to communicate, track progress and stay engaged with the program," he said. "If I experienced flare ups or aggravation to the area, Jeremy would immediately suggest modifications to address the issues I experienced."

Those small tweaks made quite an impact, because by the final week of the program, Keith noticed significant improvement. "Before the program, it felt like I only had 30% of my total abilities," he said.

"I'm at 85%–90% today. There's no numbness or tingling. I can pick up a suitcase off a conveyor belt, I can bend over and tie my shoes."

Best of all, Keith could return to the activities he loved most: snowboarding, skateboarding, and surfing. Thanks to Virtual MSK Care, he was finally back in action.

Virtual MSK Care

Learn how HealthJoy's Virtual MSK Care solution uses innovative exercise therapy to help your employees get back in action. Schedule a demo to see Virtual MSK Care today.

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