

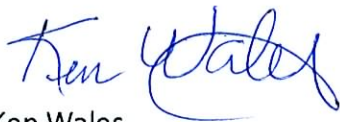
Dear Dr. Hawk,

This Thanksgiving gave me something to be quite thankful for, I have been released from the terrible pain I have quietly endured for the past 10 years. You gave me a new hip! It is a long story but I will try to be brief. About 11 years ago I had a car accident at work one wintery day and hurt my back. I have degenerative disk disease and by keeping myself fit through Martial Arts and bicycle riding, was able to keep one step ahead of the disease debilitating me. This accident appeared to have put me over the edge and over the next few years I did everything I could to relieve this new found friend, incessant back pain. MRIs showed all the common issues associated with back problems. All the experts I was going to said I was doing a good thing for my back with all the bike riding I was doing daily. Keep it up they said. During the summer of 2011 I got some bursitis injections in my left hip, I'd had them before and they had helped a little bit for something I did not associate with back pain. This time however, they wore off in about 4 days and I got mad. Real mad. I said you all have been MRI-ing the heck out of my back, can we do my hips? I had a gut instinct more was going on, something everyone might be missing. The MRI results came back and I was told there was a problem. I smiled and said can we get some x-rays? The x-rays came back and even I could see the bone on bone contact of about half of the socket. Every medical person I showed the x-rays to said it did not happen overnight and asked how did I manage to function with such deterioration? I said a lot of determination and a lot of help from pain killers over the years. The photos I included with this letter show a pile of hundreds of empty pill bottles I kept over the years. I now have a 13 gallon Hefty trash bag filled with hundreds of empty Percocet and Vicodin bottles as well as Tramadol, Prednisone and other pain killers and anti-inflammatory pills. I used to awake in the morning and before I could even get out of bed to start my day, I would take a Percocet or Vicodin and have to wait about 30 minutes or so just so I could function with "less" pain. This sort of wet blanket to start the day affects many things in one's life negatively. As the day progressed, more pills were part of my daily regimen. It hurt to sit; I could not stand in one position long as I had to constantly be shifting around. By the end of the day I was pretty exhausted fighting the medication effects as well as the physical fight dealing with the pain that never went away. It was like a friend perched on my shoulder all day long and I grew accustomed to the idea that this was my life which psychologically has some very negative effects. Finally, after you and Dr. Palumbo examined me, I was scheduled in for hip replacement in August. What a turnaround in my life was to come! I went through PT at OAA and was released early from the therapy there because my therapist saw the determination I had to get better and my desire to protect this investment in my body and my health and trusted me to continue PT at home on my own. So I came home and continued PT and eventually was able to get back on my bicycle which I had quit riding late spring due to a struggle to even ride 2 miles a day without excruciating pain. I can remember the day I had ridden about 4 miles and instead of turning one way to go home, I decided to continue and ended up doing close to 15 miles that day. I was excited beyond words

and began to do this daily and weather permitting, I ride anywhere from 10 to 20 miles daily now having lost my toothpick legs that had withered away on me. Then one day I was in the bathroom using it to urinate and realized I was standing there with both feet flat on the floor like men do. Prior to the hip replacement I used to have to stand with my left knee positioned forward and left heel raised to relieve the pressure and pain in my left hip. Mind you, I had always thought this was back pain related. When I realized I could do something so basic in a normal manner, it brought tears to my eyes it was so emotional to me. Something we men take so much for granted. As I have continued my journey to regained health, I look forward to enjoying things I had resigned myself to being lost forever. I love photography and hiking to difficult places is a part of that hobby which I can now resume. People I work with have noticed a "new" me, actually it is a return of the happier old me prior to the onset of pain many years ago. My daughter said to me over Thanksgiving, "I have my Dad back." Dr. Hawk, I want to thank you for giving me my life back, I am indebted to you for your skills. I am grateful to God that I live in a country where I can have such a benefit and to OAA for having such a group of skilled professionals all under one roof. I would hope that others can gain hope from my testimonial here and that doctors can look beyond what appears to be common back pain and discover it could be a hip problem causing ones pain as was my case.

I want you to know how grateful I am for having been given restored, renewed life. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ken Wales". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Ken Wales