

# CASE STUDY: 8 Years of Chronic Back Pain

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MARCH 13, 2014 BY [INTRINSI](#) ([EDIT](#))

by osteopathic manual therapist [Scott Lawrence](#)

Imagine how it feels to seek help from various health practitioners for 8 years and obtain no relief from your distress.

Jane had reluctantly decided to live with her back pain after seeing no improvement for so long. Naturally, this was incredibly frustrating. She used to be a high level ballet dancer; now she could run no longer than 5km and would feel pain when practicing ballet or yoga. Even simple things like driving and sleeping on her right side were uncomfortable.



When Jane contacted me, it had been three years since she had stopped seeking help for the pain. When she heard about the way I treated, she was skeptical. I was able to reassure her and she decided to give osteopathic manual therapy a try.

During the first session, we talked about her health and focused on how and why the back pain might have started. Then, as with every new client, I looked at how

she was moving and assessed all the main joints in her body to begin to unravel her body's inability to resolve the problem on its own.

It was clear to me that Jane's pelvis was stuck on one side. There was also a restriction higher up in her low back. Neither of these places was painful. The pain was in between the two 'stuck' areas. This gave me a clue as to why other treatment might not have been successful. The other practitioners were treating the painful area and forgetting to look elsewhere. The two 'stuck' areas were forcing the painful one to overwork and causing a vicious cycle of constant irritation and pain – the body was crying out for someone to take the strain off the overworked segment so that it could take a break.

Treatment included hands-on work to get the stuck areas moving. I worked on her lower back muscles to allow them to relax and on her rib cage to help her twist more easily through her upper body. (I find this is a good way to prevent neck problems as well as take the strain off the lower back. The mid back is a key area of the body that often gets stiff and causes other areas to work too hard.)

Immediately Jane noticed a difference in the way she was walking; it felt effortless and balanced. She was amazed – especially as she had never been aware of problems with her walking before.

After two treatments, Jane could drive and do yoga without pain.

We've done four treatments so far and Jane has no back pain. Obviously, I'm thrilled for her and she's pretty thrilled too.

**Here's what Jane had to say:**

I had been to countless other health providers such as chiropractors, acupuncturists, massage therapists, physiotherapists, sports medicine doctors, and physicians specializing in back pain and soft-tissue injuries. However, certain activities remained painful or uncomfortable, such as running, standing or sitting, and sleeping on my back. After my first visit to Scott, he adjusted the right side of my pelvis and worked on the surrounding muscles. When I left his office, ***I immediately noticed a difference!*** The muscles in my right leg felt freer and walking was instantly easier. There was no tension in my lower back or my right IT band, which I usually felt after walking for a short time. I am now able to resume activities such as running and am able to practice ballet with more flexibility and significantly less pain!

If you have any questions about Jane's story or chronic back pain, please email [Scott Lawrence](mailto:scott@intrinsic.ca) at [scott@intrinsic.ca](mailto:scott@intrinsic.ca)