

Can you imagine not being able to walk just 50 feet from your kitchen to your bedroom without taking a break for pain relief? Or, how about abandoning your shopping cart at your grocery store because you couldn't stand any longer to wait in the check-out lane? For 60-year-old nurse manager Sue Bartoszewski this was an unfortunate reality.

Sue was having health problems associated with being overweight. In 2007, she watched her son complete his first Ironman triathlon and something clicked for Sue – she was inspired and decided it was time to commit to a healthier lifestyle. Sue started walking on the treadmill working her way up to running. She incorporated swimming and biking into her exercise routine and ultimately decided to train for her first Ironman triathlon. It was around this time that Sue noticed a localized pain in her lower back that extended to her left hip and down her leg to her knee. For months Sue dismissed the pain and powered through it, but the more she exercised, the more pain she experienced. Frustrated and fed up with her limiting lifestyle, Sue sought professional advice.

Sue is a clinical nurse manager for surgical services at Centegra Hospital-McHenry where she has worked for 30 years. As a nurse, Sue works closely with physicians and consulted with her colleague and pain medicine specialist, Dr. Terri Dallas-Prunskis, about her lower back pain. Initially Dr. Dallas-Prunskis suspected Sue's facet joints (small stabilizing joints) were causing the pain and she treated these joints with standard radiofrequency and performed diagnostic facet joint injections obtaining some pain relief. Shortly thereafter, a new treatment called cooled radiofrequency was available and Dr. Dallas-Prunskis administered the cooled radiofrequency on Sue's facet joints. While the treatment relieved some of Sue's back pain, it didn't completely alleviate it.

Sue and Dr. Dallas-Prunskis discussed other possible sources that were causing her pain and decided to try a non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory local injection into the sacroiliac joint (the joint that connects the tailbone to the pelvis, or hipbone). The local injection finally gave Sue the relief she was seeking. Now with the exact source of pain identified, Dr. Dallas-Prunskis treated Sue's sacroiliac joint with the SInergy Cooled Radiofrequency (RF) System, a minimally-invasive, non-pharmacological treatment option for those suffering from sacroiliac joint (SIJ) pain. Within three to four days of receiving the treatment Sue noticed a marked difference, and within three to four weeks her pain completely disappeared and has never returned.

Sue competed in the Ironman Wisconsin, merely eight months after receiving the SInergy Cooled Radiofrequency (RF) treatment. She was thrilled that she was able to complete and finish first in her age group, which gave her a qualifying slot for the World Championship race in Kona in 2013, a feat that would never have been possible before her Cooled RF treatment.