

The bounce in his step is back

Farming, and all the labors that go into it, is rough on the body.

Ask John E. Clark of Greensboro.

He just turned 77 years old, and he has been punished by aches and pains and just plain hurts for many of those years.

On this day, he was lying comfortably, on his back, on a special treatment table in the office of Easton chiropractor Dr. Christopher Cianci.

The table was gently applying movement to decompress Clark's troubled spine.

The decompression table, Dr. Cianci explained, is a computer-guided specialized traction table that puts a gentle decompression protocol on the spine.

"It puts the spine through a prescribed protocol that is designed to relieve pressure on the nerves and discs," he said.

"It essentially is able to get joints that have become stiff and immobile and gets them working more normally."

On this day, it was coming up to Mother's Day.

Clark smiled.

"That's my birthday," he said, noting that he would be 77.

"My mother used to tell my sisters I was the best present your father ever gave me." He said with a laugh. "They didn't like that much."

Clark has been all over the agricultural business in the Central Shore area.

For the last eight years, he has been a feed salesman for Delmarva Feed in Kennedyville — "feed for cattle, hogs, horses, mostly horse feed these days," he said.

But he's milked cows, spread manure, thrown hay and straw bales on wagons and trucks, hauled feed and seed sacks, and generally, as he will attest, given his body, and particularly his back a workout.

And those back problems



The Cianci Chronicles

Dr. Christopher Cianci
Licensed chiropractor,
Easton Md.

(Authored by Bruce Hotchkiss)

continue to translate into leg problems.

"I have worked hard all of my life," he said, "and I guess I have done some stupid things. But I have had to keep going."

Clark is no stranger to chiropractor care. He has sought it for many years.

He recalls that a chiropractor he formerly used, told him, after assessing the condition of his spine.

"I can help you," he said. "But I can't cure you ... but he couldn't quite get there."

Then, in April, 2000, Clark's son, Phil, and his wife, Tammy, were injured in an automobile accident and the insurance company sent them both to Dr. Cianci for treatment.

The treatment was so successful, he said, that his son ultimately insisted that the elder Clark seek an appointment with Dr. Cianci.

"Mr Clark had been told by a doctor that not much could be done for him." Dr. Cianci said. "Essentially, he was told his spine was worn out."

After a full evaluation. Dr. Cianci said he felt confident that a combination of chiropractic care and decompression would easily help him.

"I've seen it work too many times." Dr. Cianci said.

"The far reaching ability of this treatment modality to help people who are close to giving up continues to amaze me."

Dr. Cianci painted this scenario.

"Mr. Clark was having trouble walking any distance. He would have to sit down to rest after walking a short distance. This can easily start a downward spiral for him.

"If he doesn't walk, he gets stiffer and weaker and, as time goes by, he could easily begin to feel as if he was on a treadmill that he can't keep up with.

"He could see his life slipping away.

"Here's a guy who wants to stay active. Work is in his blood. It's who he is. If you take that away from him, he'd lose a great deal, including that warm smile he wears everyday."

Dr. Cianci said that "everyday we get to see patients who have been to other doctors.

They have tried various drug regimens.

They may have had cortisone shots in their spine. They are abandoning activities because of the pain caused by spinal arthritis, bulging discs and spines that are "worn out."

"Too often, we are the last resort. It shouldn't be that way. But too often it is."

It was evident from his demeanor, both as he lay on the decompression table and when he arose to leave Dr. Cianci's office, that John E. Clark, jack of all agricultural trades, was feeling better these days.

"I work better," he said, "I feel better while I'm working, better than I have in a long time."

Outside, he walked to his car.

"I think I have more bounce in my step," he said, adding somewhat cautiously, "but I haven't told him that yet."