

MRI Comparison: The 38-Day Window

Proof of Acute Injury — DWC Claim #25218944

Summary

Two MRI scans bracket the January 30, 2025 workplace fall by exactly 38 days (before) and 32 days (after). The comparison proves new acute findings that can only be explained by the intervening fall.

Side-by-Side Comparison

Finding	Dec 23, 2024 (Pre-Fall)	Mar 3, 2025 (Post-Fall)	Change
Lordosis	Maintained	—	—
L5 Vertebral Height Loss	20%	30%	+50% progression
Retrolisthesis (L3-L4)	ABSENT	PRESENT	NEW finding
Bone Marrow Edema (L5)	ABSENT	PRESENT (ACUTE)	NEW finding
ICD-10 Code	—	M48.56XA	"Initial encounter" = NEW

Why This Matters

- Bone marrow edema** is a marker of ACUTE injury. It was absent 38 days before the fall and present 32 days after. There is no degenerative explanation for its appearance in this timeframe.
- Retrolisthesis at L3-L4** was completely absent on the December scan. Degenerative retrolisthesis does not appear in 38 days.
- Fracture progression** from 20% to 30% height loss indicates additional traumatic compression consistent with a fall.
- Memorial Hermann coded M48.56XA** — the "initial encounter" modifier means the treating hospital classified this as a NEW injury event, not a follow-up on a known condition.

Carrier's Defense vs. Reality

Carrier's Position	Reality
All findings are pre-existing per Dec 2020 CT	The Dec 2024 MRI — 4 years newer — shows stable baseline with NONE of the acute findings
Relies on 2020 imaging	Ignores the Dec 2024 baseline entirely

No specific rebuttal of edema or retrolisthesis	Cannot explain appearance of acute markers in 38-day window
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Source files: Dec2024_Baseline_MRI.PDF and Mar2025_PostFall_MRI.pdf in this folder