How do you measure success in personal training? It can be difficult to assess the impact of showing up regularly! However, this week I received some test results that helped to convince me of the positive results of my training program.

As background, I have limited range of motion in my right ankle as a result of a severe injury that required several surgical procedures, and this has made it difficult to walk on uneven surfaces. In addition, I had been diagnosed with osteopenia (low bone density) in 2003, which was of particular concern since my mother had suffered from osteoporosis-related compression fractures. I was on medication for several years (through 2014) to help improve my bone density, and there was some improvement in my test results during that time.

When I retired in 2016, my husband encouraged me to begin a training program with Laurie. For the past two and a half years, I’ve been seeing Laurie twice a week for strength training. I appreciate that I’m getting individual help so that I do things correctly, and Laurie has progressively increased the amount of weight that I use for each exercise over time.

Strength, mobility and balance in my right ankle have improved. While it is hard to objectively measure this, I went hiking in the mountains in Poland a few months ago, and both my daughter and I noticed that I had less difficulty walking on the rocky path than I’ve had in the past.

I had a routine follow-up bone density test within a week of starting my training program. I recently had a follow up bone density test, so I’m able to see how training has affected my bones. Compared to the test done at the time I started strength training, there has been improvement in bone density in my lumbar spine, hip and femoral neck, and my bone density is now within the normal range. The results for my spine and hip are better than they were when I was fifteen years younger, and the results for the femoral neck show statistically significant improvement over the past two and a half years.

Strength training makes a difference! I am grateful that it has improved my ankle function and reduced my chance of fractures in the years ahead.