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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
VA Regional Office
ONE VETERANS PLAZA
781 Clay
Waco TX 76799

KURT PRIESSMAN

VA File Number
185 78 1567

Represented by:
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE US

Rating Decision
July 14, 2008

INTRODUCTION

The records reflect that you are a Veteran who served in the Air Force from July 16, 1970, to July 31, 1990. You filed a claim for increased evaluation that was received on December 23, 2006. Based on a review of the evidence listed below, we have made the following decisions on your claim.

DECISION

- 1 . Evaluation of laxity of anterior cruciate and lateral collateral ligaments with rotary instability of the right knee, which is currently 20 percent disabling, is continued.
- 2 . Service connection for limitation of motion, right knee (also claimed as arthritis right knee) is granted with an evaluation of 10 percent effective October 25, 2006.
- 3 . Service connection for degenerative joint disease (DJD) and degenerative disc disease (DDD) of the lumbar spine (also claimed as DJD of back, lower spine, facet joints, and as

addendum that your current back condition is more likely than not related to your multiple in-service complaints of low back pain.

Because the available evidence shows your DDD and DDD of lumbar spine is more likely than not related to in-service treatment for low back pain, and because the evidence shows forward flexion greater than 30 degrees but not greater than 60 degrees (45 degrees); service connection for degenerative joint disease (DJD) and degenerative disc disease (DDD) of the lumbar spine (also claimed as DHD of back, lower spine, facet joints, and as DHD and ankylosis of lumbar sacral joint, disc protrusions, bulge, calcification, narrowing, and spasms), is granted with an evaluation of 30 percent effective December 25, 2006, date of receipt of your claim.

The criteria for rating diseases and injuries of the spine apply with or without symptoms such as pain (whether or not it radiates), stiffness, or aching in the area of the spine affected by residuals of injury or disease. An evaluation of 30 percent is granted for forward flexion of the thoracolumbar spine greater than 30 degrees but not greater than 60 degrees; or the combined range of motion of the thoracolumbar spine is not greater than 120 degrees; or for muscle spasm or guarding severe enough to result in an abnormal gait or abnormal spinal contour such as scoliosis, reversed lordosis, or abnormal kyphosis. A higher evaluation of 40% is not warranted unless there is forward flexion of the thoracolumbar spine of 30 degrees or less, or favorable ankylosis of the entire thoracolumbar spine. Range of motion criteria can be met when repetitive testing shows functional limitation due to pain, weakness, fatigability, or loss of coordination (DeLuca criteria).

4. Service connection for diabetes mellitus type II.

The service department researched the issue of use of herbicides at airports in Thailand, and found documentation of approval to conduct soil sterilization and/or defoliation operations on or around US occupied installations in Thailand.

You were stationed at Korat AFB Thailand and provided pictures and statements of your duties, including perimeter checking with dogs.

Because the service department shows documentation supporting authorization use of herbicides at US occupied installations in Thailand, and you provided statements and pictures supporting the contention, exposure to herbicides in Thailand is conceded.

You reported to the VA Examiner that you cannot do any strenuous physical activity at work because that can cause a hypoglycemic reaction. A review of available medical evidence did not show medical treatment for episodes of hypoglycemic reactions that occurred because of strenuous physical activity. The VA Examiner did not state that you should avoid strenuous activity to prevent episodes of hypoglycemia.