

# Christchurch mosque shooting survivor who saved his son returns to work in United Arab Emirates

Charlie Gates 15:36, Jun 07 2019

*STUFF*

Adeeb Sami wasn't supposed to be in Christchurch's Al Noor mosque on March 15, but he thinks he was put there to save his son.

He changed his plans at the last minute to make sure he was in [the city to celebrate his birthday with family on March 24](#). He landed on March 14, one day before the terror attack.

Sami was in the mosque with his son, Ali Adeeb, when the gunman entered. He was shot in the hip. The bullet shattered his pelvis and exploded, damaging his kidneys and stomach.



*JOHN KIRK-ANDERSON/STUFF*

Ali Adeeb, 23, and his father, Adeeb Sami, who was shot twice in the mosque attack, once while shielding Ali.

He managed to find his son and told him to get on the ground and play dead. He then got on top of his son to protect him. While they both lay on the ground, the gunman returned and shot Sami in the shoulder. His son beneath him was unharmed.

"My son is a pharmacist so, after the shooting, he came and pressed my wounds and stopped them from bleeding. He helped me and I helped him. Maybe that is why I was there.



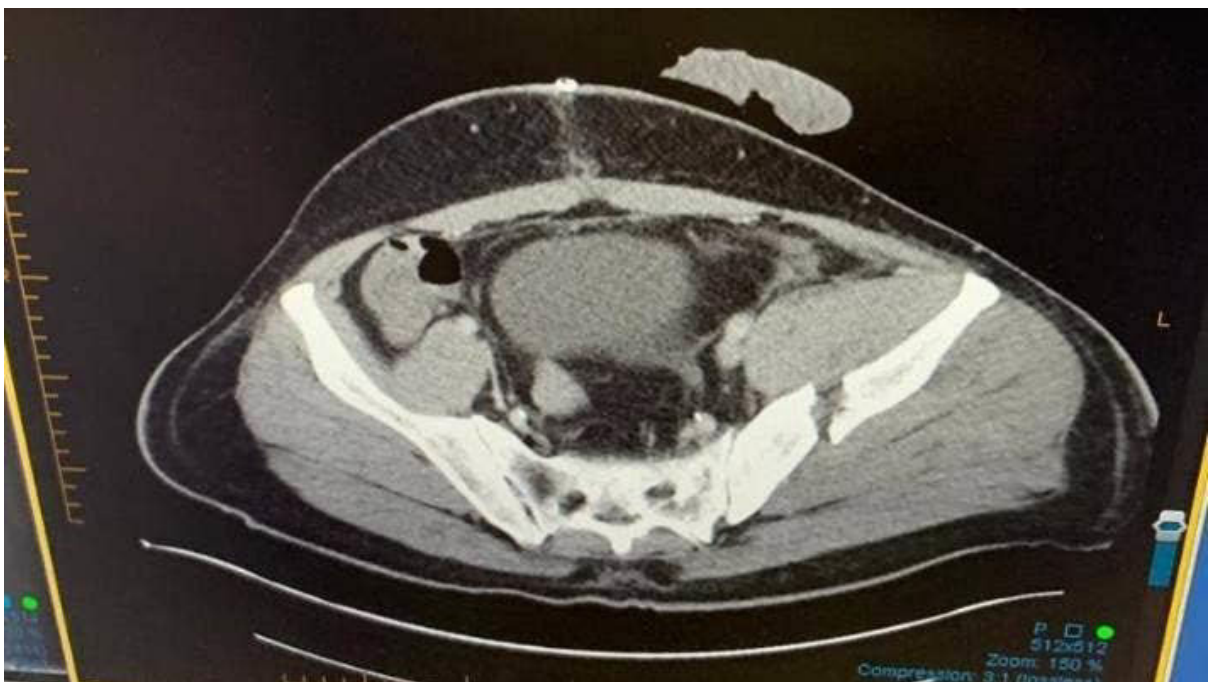
*Adeeb Sami*

A scan shows Sami's shattered pelvis on the right.

"When I saw Ali standing up after the shooting, it was the greatest moment of my life."

Sami is based in Christchurch, but works for part of the year in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as a civil engineer. He was born in Iraq and moved to Christchurch in 2011. He has recovered well and is now fit enough to fly back to the UAE on Friday.

"I am feeling much better. If I walk for more than a kilometre I need a stick, but for the first kilometre I don't need the stick."



*Adeeb Sami*

Adeeb Sami's pelvis was shattered by a bullet in the March 15 terror attack.

"It will take a year to get to final recovery. It is a big crack in my pelvis. It is amazing that I am walking."

He was in a coma for three days after the shooting. When he came round he could not speak, but hospital staff gave him a board to write on.

He had a single burning question.



*ALDEN WILLIAMS/STUFF*

Ali Adeeb just a few days after his father was shot in the terror attack.

"I am a big fan of [tennis player] Roger Federer. When they gave me the board to write something, I remembered that Federer was playing.

"I wrote 'Federer' on the board. They didn't know what it meant. They were not tennis fans.

"[My son] told me that Federer had won, but in reality he had lost."



*JOHN KIRK-ANDERSON/STUFF*

Sami is flying back to the UAE to resume his work as a civil engineer.

Sami spent his 54th birthday in hospital.

"The nurse bought cake and it was a nice celebration. The mayor was visiting the hospital and we celebrated all together."

He will return to Christchurch in September for a fourth operation.

"They booked my operation for September 11 [the date of the terror attack on the US in 2001]. I asked if they had a different date."