

I'M 61 BUT I'M NOWHERE NEAR DONE!

HOW A NEW KNEE BROUGHT BACK AN OLD HOBBY

THE DECISION TO HAVE JOINT REPLACEMENT



By David Thut, orthopedic surgeon at Seacoast Orthopedics & Sports Medicine

THE DECISION TO UNDERGO AN ELECTIVE ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY such as total knee

replacement is different from the decision for most other types of surgery. With problems like heart disease or cancer, patients may not really have other viable options, and the timing of surgery is decided by their disease. With joint issues, patients often live with progressively worsening arthritis for years before choosing to replace their joints. We can use medicine, injections, weight loss, activity modification and bracing to help keep people active and more comfortable. It is time to replace the joint when the less invasive options no longer allow a patient to live their life as actively as they would like. I cannot make the timing decision for them so I strive to educate my patients fully about their options and help them understand the risk for each choice they could make given their circumstances. Working together to design a game plan we are all comfortable with maximizes the chance of our success.

There are many reasons for knee and joint pain and most can be modified if not cured. While rushing to the orthopedic surgeon is probably overkill for each passing ache and pain, if you have lingering discomfort in any joint it is worth exploring the reasons. Often, relatively simple and low risk interventions can make a big difference. When those fail, we are lucky to live in a time where most patients can regain an active life, free of arthritis pain through joint replacement. The studies are clear that total joint replacement patients gain both in quality of life and improvement of overall health.

Wentworth-Douglass Hospital and Seacoast Orthopedics & Sports Medicine have worked hard to build a total joint replacement program which is team focused but where the patient is the center of the team. Each patient spends a morning in Joint Camp at Wentworth-Douglass where they have the chance to meet many of the OR staff, nurses and physical therapists who will ensure a smooth hospital experience. This education allows patients to come to the hospital on the morning of their surgery fully understanding their role in their own recovery. Starting just hours after surgery, our patients are up and walking in their private room and our dedicated team takes advantage of the facilities in the hospital's beautiful new inpatient wing to help guide them down the path toward a more comfortable and active life.

For more information about the Joint Replacement Center at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital, please call 603-609-6135 or visit www.WDHospital.com/JointReplacement.

THE PAIN IN HER LEFT KNEE was bad enough to prevent her from her favorite hobbies – landscaping, skiing and swimming. “You can be 61 and old or 61 and young,” said Chris Wood, a special education teacher from North Berwick, Maine. “I prefer to be 61 and young!”

Chris, who has been skiing since the age of three and who is passionate about landscaping multiple acres of property at her home, said she had to think seriously about her quality of life. “I’m 61 but I’m nowhere near done,” she added.

After two months of living with the excruciating pain, Chris decided it was time to meet with David Thut, MD, of Seacoast Orthopedics & Sports Medicine. She worked with Dr. Thut on some previous orthopedic needs and she knew she would feel comfortable in his care. Chris started with a few other treatments before deciding to move forward with a total knee replacement.

“I was really scared and that’s why I put it off,” said Chris, describing her decision for a total joint replacement. “When I met with Dr. Thut, I immediately felt at ease because there was no pressure from him or his team. It was an amazing experience because you’re included in everything and you feel like you’re truly part of the team. I never felt left out of the conversation. Once I made the decision to have the knee replacement, I felt relaxed and it was a huge weight off my shoulders.”

According to Dr. Thut, commitment from a patient is extremely important for a successful outcome of a joint replacement. “I like to keep patients engaged from the beginning,” he said. “In the end, it is the enthusiasm the patient displays in physical therapy after surgery that ensures ideal surgical results. Chris has a positive, ‘can do’ attitude that is ideal for an orthopedic patient. Her desire to feel better is obvious in her hard work after surgery and her outcome is testament to the success of a team approach.”

Chris was impressed by the experience with Wentworth-Douglass Hospital’s Joint Replacement Center and the way the staff motivated her throughout the process. “You get right up and start moving,” said Chris. “By the third day in the hospital, you’re ready to go home. Everyone in the hospital was awesome. They all just bent over backwards to get me anything I needed to be comfortable.”

Chris is back to landscaping and enjoying her life again. She hopes next year she can return to the mountains to ski and enjoy the views and sting of cold air across her face. This year, she plans to get back to snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

For more information about joint pain, join us for our free educational programs led by Wentworth-Douglass nurses and physicians from Seacoast Orthopedics & Sports Medicine. See the back page for topics, dates and registration information.



THE RIPPLING EFFECT OF MUSIC

WHY ARE WE SO DRIVEN BY MUSIC? WELL, IT IS BECAUSE WE ARE MUSIC.
By Maurizio Paura, Certified Music Practitioner and Wentworth-Douglass Hospital volunteer

EVERYTHING IN THE UNIVERSE, at the most basic molecular level, vibrates. As part of that universe, we vibrate and are continuously exposed to a variety of resonance and vibrational fields. We resonate with our surrounding world. As part of a system where everything resonates at the most minuscule molecular level, everything is in balance when we resonate with what surrounds us.

It is very important and therapeutic to find the time to rest from the chaos of everyday life and let ourselves regenerate and recognize the beauty around us. This is why I believe that the use of therapeutic music in the healthcare environment is a very beneficial tool for patients and staff. It gives us that chance to unplug and regenerate.

Since the beginning of time, music has always held a special place among different cultures around the world. Constantly used for rituals and religious ceremonies, music worked its way into the everyday life of our ancestors and is now in our own lives as an entertainment form and as a comfort for our souls. The benefits of music ripple through time.

Open your ears and your heart to the rippling effect of music.

For more information about Music Therapy at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital, please call Integrative Wellness Services at 603-740-2649.

