



St. Mary Joint Replacement Center

St. Mary Medical Center

JOG for JOINTS

5th Annual Promoting bone and joint health for a lifetime.

Faster Recovery

Fewer Complications

St. Mary Medical Center hosts 5th annual "Jog for Joints"

St. Mary Medical Center will host the 5th annual "Jog for Joints: Promoting bone and joint health for a lifetime," at 7:30 a.m., Saturday, April 20, 2013 outside of the St. Mary Child Development Center. The 5K run/walk and orthopedic patient reunion walk of up to one mile starts and ends in Pavilion 11 of Core Creek Park, at the back of the St. Mary Campus. This professionally timed 5K run/walk and orthopedic patient reunion walk of up to one mile acknowledges the accomplishments of past joint-replacement patients and raises awareness of the comprehensive and advanced orthopedic services offered at St. Mary.

"Jog for Joints: Promoting bone and joint health for a lifetime" is a free event open to the public, but pre-registration is required for participants. The event includes informative speakers, awards and brunch program, a B101 DJ and entertainment, door prizes, as well as autographs and photographs with Philadelphia Eagles legends. All participants will also receive a free t-shirt. To register, please visit



www.StMaryHealthcare.org/jogforjoints or call 215-710-6573 or 215-710-2636. Participants are strongly encouraged to use free parking in the St. Mary parking garage. Parking at the back of the campus is restricted for emergency services.

A brunch following the run/walk will include an informative speaker program

featuring Dr. George Cautilli, medical director, St. Mary Joint Replacement Center, and a patient who received joint replacement at St. Mary. Philadelphia sports legends Bill Clement and Joe Watson of the Broad Street Bullies, and former team members of the Philadelphia Eagles, are scheduled to attend the event and be available for photographs and autographs.

"There are many benefits to living an active lifestyle, and Jog for Joints is a great opportunity for people to get out there and participate. We host this event to raise awareness of our comprehensive orthopedic services and to acknowledge the accomplishments of our joint replacement patients," said Cautilli.

Supporting joint replacement patients every step of the way

By CHRISTINE CARDELLINO
CORRESPONDENT

At the Center for Joint Replacement at St. Mary Medical Center, the focus on patients never really ends. Several times a year, the Center hosts an informal reunion luncheon for people who've had knee or hip replacement surgery as well as the hospital staff involved in their care. Staff members get to see how well patients are getting around after surgery. Patients get to share feedback on their experience, as well as their ideas for making the program even better. Joint-replacement patients attending a recent Patient Reunion Luncheon held March 19 at the Middletown County Club were interviewed for this article.

Even though she lives almost an hour away in the Olney section of Philadelphia, Diane Carter Ruffin didn't think twice about traveling to the Center for Joint Replacement at St. Mary Medical Center in Langhorne to have knee replacement surgery. Ruffin's knee pain, which had been troubling her for a couple of years, had become so unbearable that she couldn't even stand at her kitchen sink long enough to wash dishes.

Before deciding where to have surgery, Ruffin — not content with the choice of big-city hospitals closer to home — says that she "did a lot of research" to find the best fit. She was drawn to St. Mary Medical Center, in particular, after she attended one of the hospital's free joint pain seminars.

"We offer educational seminars twice each month. They're open to anyone from the community, especially people who find that they are not moving around as well as they used to or those who have a lot of pain while doing everyday activities such as walking and climbing stairs," says Vicki Zaino, RN, St. Mary's orthopedic navigator, who leads the classes. "The seminars are a great way to learn about why your knees or hips are bothering you, and what you can do to get relief from the pain."

George Cautilli, MD, medical director of the Center for Joint Replacement at St. Mary Medical Center, notes that the joint pain seminars are one aspect of the highly personalized care you'll receive at St. Mary.

"From pre-operative education and exercise instruction, through surgery, rehabilitation, and recovery after surgery — our patient-centered approach is designed to help you get back to your favorite activities and daily routine as quickly and safely as possible," he said.

In her role as orthopedic navigator, Zaino coordinates all the care-related details for every patient — so they can focus on getting better. In addition, Zaino is readily available to answer questions and address concerns along the way — so patients know exactly what to expect before, during, and after surgery. St. Mary's patient care team also includes highly experienced, board-certified orthopedic surgeons, and registered nurses and rehabilitation therapists who specialize in total joint care.

Acknowledging that she was "tired of hurting all the time," Marily Richards, of Bristol Township, had both of her knees replaced at St. Mary. Before her surgeries, which were performed about three months apart, she often used a cane and walker — and sometimes a wheelchair if she had to walk a far distance.

"I have three other hospitals closer to me, but I chose St. Mary, and I'm glad I did. Everyone on the staff was very caring and concerned about me as a person," she shares.

During her hospital stay, Richards especially enjoyed St. Mary's "At Your Request" room-service dining. This popular patient amenity allows you to order breakfast, lunch, and dinner from an extensive restaurant-style menu. You order when you feel like eating, and everything is freshly prepared and delivered to your room in 45 minutes or less. The menu offers something for every palate, even for people with special dietary needs.

Both Richards and Ruffin already have recommended the Center for Joint Replacement at St. Mary Medical Center to people they know.

"My experience was excellent; it exceeded my very high expectations. The atmosphere at the hospital was so peaceful. The doctors, nurses, and therapists understood exactly what I was going through and made me feel really comfortable," says Ruffin.

She continues, "Just because you have something right around the corner from you, it doesn't mean you're going to have the same experience. And when you are considering surgery, you want a hospital where you'll be comfortable and get excellent care, where the doctors are very well qualified, and where everyone treats you with the utmost respect. That's exactly what I found at St. Mary."

Each spring, St. Mary also sponsors "Jog for Joints," a professionally timed 5K run/walk, as well as a one-mile orthopedic patient reunion walk. This year's event takes place on Saturday, April 20, at Core Creek Park in Langhorne.

Center's approach: Patients moving from day one

By CHRISTIAN SCHAPPEL
CORRESPONDENT

To the average person, the phrase "joint replacement" conjures up bad thoughts — like being laid up in a hospital bed and a long, painful recovery.

Those perceptions are outdated now, according to physicians at St. Mary Medical Center's Center for Joint Replacement.

Whether you're talking about knee or hip replacement, "We get patients up and walking the day of surgery," said Dr. George Cautilli, medical director at the Center for Joint Replacement at St. Mary.

Sound too good to be true? It's not. Hip and knee replacement patients stay an average of just two and a half days, far exceeding national benchmarks for average length of stay, said Cautilli.

As a result, the medical center has earned two prestigious national honors: It was the first hospital in Pennsylvania to be awarded The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for hip and knee replacement surgery; and it's been designated a Blue Distinction Center+ (Plus) for hip and knee replacements by Independence Blue Cross.

Both distinctions are given to medical facilities that have demonstrated a track record of providing high-quality care.

Cautilli, along with Dr. Arjun Saxena, an orthopedic surgeon at St. Mary who also specializes in adult hip and knee replacement, explained that the biggest keys to the medical center's success are its consistent team approach to patient education and care, as well as its multimodal pain management program.

"The first focus is patient education," Cautilli said. "We have to set expectations with the patient as to what we're going to do and what they will experience."

In the days leading up to surgery, patients are given a notebook and attend a class that explains everything the patient will go through pre- and post-surgery. The notebook serves as a daily planner or checklist

to help patients and families prepare for surgery and recovery. Patients also are expected to perform mobility and strengthening exercises before their operation, which will give them a foundation for the kinds of therapy they'll go through after their joint replacement.

"It all helps them get mentally prepared for everything they'll do later," Cautilli said. "We want patients to see themselves as partners in their recovery."

As part of the planned recovery following surgery, most patients are able to walk a significant distance the evening of their surgery.

"Being active reduces the chance of blood clots and improves lung function and joint mobility," Cautilli said.

Helping to get them out of bed on the day of surgery is St. Mary's special approach to pain management.

"By controlling pain and using appropriate medications we often achieve that — getting patients out of bed the same day as surgery," Saxena said.

He explained that St. Mary patients will often be given a spinal anesthetic prior to surgery, which reduces leg pain. Patients are also given oral medications both before and after surgery. The result is longer-lasting pain control.

Saxena also pointed out that a new procedure is now being performed at St. Mary — the direct anterior approach to hip replacement.

"In 90 percent of the hip replacements in the country, at some point, a muscle or tendon is cut or split," Saxena said. However, that's not the case with the new state-of-the-art direct anterior approach used at St. Mary.

In this approach, physicians perform the replacement by going between the muscles in the hip, rather than cutting them.

"It offers a less painful recovery," Saxena said. "Patients can also get out of the hospital faster and, in a lot of cases, get back to work sooner."

Not all patients are candidates for direct anterior approach for hip replacement. The orthopedic surgeon can help patients decide the best option for their procedure.



Dr. George Cautilli visits a patient a day after her knee-replacement surgery.

Joint replacement patient education at St. Mary Medical Center

By SANDI PACHUTA
CORRESPONDENT

Patients undergoing joint replacement typically have a lot of questions before the procedure. St. Mary Medical Center offers a joint replacement pre-op class twice a month to help answer the most frequently asked questions. These comprehensive classes give patients detailed information on what to expect before joint replacement surgery, the day of the surgery, and recovery after the surgery.

St. Mary's joint replacement services include total hip and knee joint replacement surgery, as well as less invasive techniques to repair damaged joints. St. Mary started offering multidisciplinary classes in January 2013 based on feedback from patients.

According to Vicki Zaino, orthopedic navigator at St. Mary, nurses from the operating room, physical therapists, pharmacists, and care managers are present with her to answer the variety of questions that patients may have at the pre-op class. "This way patients also can get familiar with the faces they will be seeing during their hospital stay," said Zaino.

Typical questions addressed at the joint pre-op class include: how long the patient will be in the hospital — and people are surprised to learn it usually is less than 3 days, Zaino said. Most patients also want information on pain management, and whether they will go home or go to a rehabilitation facility. "Eighty to 85 percent of our patients go home with follow-up visits scheduled with physical therapy and a nurse," said Zaino.

Class participants also are strongly encouraged to do the pre-op exercises. A family member or support person is welcome to attend the pre-op class as well as the therapy sessions following surgery that are held in the gym on the Joint Replacement unit to provide encouragement and support. "I encourage the family to serve as coaches during and after a patient's surgery to promote a faster recovery," said Zaino.

Other important topics covered in the class are what to expect during the hospital stay, the role of the patient in the hospital, and



Case manager Cathy Provost explains the use of a walker as Orthopedic Navigator Vicki Zaino, back left, and Orthopedic Nurse Mike Morrow wait their turn to speak with pre-op class members.

details for hospital discharge planning.

It is noted in the pre-op class that the patient will have some discomfort following the surgery. However, appropriate medication and early activity will help to reduce pain and speed recovery. Patients should expect their post-surgery activity to include out-of-bed walking the same night after surgery.

After patients are released from the hospital, a visiting nurse and physical therapist will visit them at home to monitor and track progress and to work with the patients on exercises. The visits typically last for a four-week period unless the physician prescribes otherwise.

The first post-op appointment with the orthopedic surgeon will take place two to three weeks after surgery.

Zaino serves as the liaison for the patient, and she is there to answer any questions the patient may have after the procedure is complete. Zaino routinely calls patients to check on their progress and that their needs are being handled.

In addition to the pre-op classes, St. Mary

offers joint pain seminars twice monthly. The seminars, which are geared toward people having joint pain, cover the causes of joint pain and treatment options that are available. According to Zaino, if a seminar attendee is interested in getting a fast-track appointment to see an orthopedic doctor, she can make that arrangement.

UPCOMING JOINT PAIN SEMINARS

All take place on the first floor of the Outpatient Care Building:

Wednesday, April 10, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. in the Trauma Conference Room;

Wednesday, April 24, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the Medical Staff Conference Room;

Wednesday, May 8, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. in the Trauma Conference Room;

Wednesday, May 22, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the Medical Staff Conference Room.

For information on joint replacement education, or to register call 215-710-2636, or email VZaino@stmaryhealthcare.org.