



## Patient Testimonials - Knee Surgery

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### **Total knee replacement, bilateral** **E.M., 69 year old man with Osteoarthritis**

For years I had been having trouble with my knees. They steadily became worse until I could not bend them enough to go down the stairs. I had to go down the stairs backwards. I also became very bow-legged.

My older brother had knee replacement surgery at Columbia University Medical Center. His surgeon was Dr. William Macaulay. He was very pleased with the results and he urged me to consult with Dr. Macaulay and I made an appointment. After examining me and having my knees X-rayed, he told me that I was definitely a candidate for bilateral knee replacement surgery.

I decided to have the surgery done and Dr. Macaulay did an excellent job. The care at New York Presbyterian Hospital was excellent as was the rehabilitation stay. I went home 13 days after surgery. I continued my therapy at home for approximately 6 weeks. For a short time, I walked with a cane then progressed to walking without it. I am walking fine. I can now walk down the stairs properly.

I have returned to normal activities. I was swimming all summer and can now run after my grandchildren like never before. My knees feel great! My legs are completely straight. I highly recommend Dr. Macaulay and the care and rehabilitation at Columbia University Medical Center.

### **Total knee replacement, bilateral** **R.Z., 80 year old man with Osteoarthritis and Heart Surgery**

For many years I have had some type of knee trouble. I owned a shoe store and did a lot of kneeling while waiting on customers and trimming my display windows. I was always full of aches and pains. I used to jog and play a lot of golf. As the years progressed, I cut back on both activities, eventually totally eliminating jogging.

In 1994, I was put on the heart transplant list. I received a new heart in November 1997. From that point, when I started rehab, I noticed a lot more pain in my knees. At first I thought it was coming from the large doses of prednisone. I went to see an orthopedic surgeon in my area who told me that I would eventually need a knee replacement. In the meantime he fitted me with a "New Age" brace. He also suggested a "synvisc" injection, but changed his mind because he was afraid of infection, given my low immune system.

In November 2000 I consulted with my transplant coordinator, Dr. Donna Mancini, and she told me it would be okay to go ahead with the knee transplant. She referred me to Dr. William Macaulay at Columbia University Medical Center. He had x-rays taken and determined that I needed replacement of both knees. At that point I said let's do it, and set up a surgery date of April 23, 2001. I was pre-tested and everything was a go for that date.

I arrived at Columbia admitting at 7 a.m. and was then sent up to pre-op. The staff was attentive and reassuring. My surgeon came in to visit me and discussed what would occur and to answer any last minute questions. I went into surgery later that morning where I was given medicine to relax and a spinal. The surgery went very well.

It was at this point that I was moved to recovery. The pain I experienced was worse than I had imagined, but I was determined to get through it the best I could. The nurses were vigilant and administered pain medication regularly to keep me as comfortable as possible. I stayed in recovery until I was moved to a room where I slept fairly comfortable that night.

The next day, a therapist got me out of bed and I took some steps to the hall and back to bed with the aid of a walker. I was placed on a Continuous Passive Motion machine. Your leg is strapped in and the machine gently flexes your knee.

On the second day, I walked from my bed down the hall and back with the help of the therapist and my walker. I was kept on the machine daily for two hours on each knee.

On the fifth day I was moved to a rehab unit. The next two days were a weekend so I was shown the rehab rooms. I was surprised to see a taxi, kitchen, store, and bathtub. What a great setup.

On the eighth day I started my actual rehabilitation. My Physical Therapist was Dawn and my Occupational Therapist was Angela. They were both very caring, but at the same time made you work hard to recover. The key was following their instructions and doing exercises on my own. On weekends we had group sessions that included therapy and some entertainment. During the week we had an indoor barbeque one day and an ice cream party on another. It may not seem like much, but it really made a difference in breaking up the rehab routine.

The nursing staff was excellent and provided pain medication on a timely basis. Needless to say, this is very important.

After two weeks of rehab, I was able to leave the hospital with just a cane. I could climb stairs and get in and out of a car. When I arrived home there was a shower chair and a commode waiting for me. The hospital had them shipped directly to my home.

I immediately started a six week therapy at a local facility. After one week I was able to get around without the use of a cane. After two weeks I no longer needed the shower chair or commode. I worked hard and was ahead of schedule by one month.

This is not an easy operation or recovery, but with hard work and a goal in mind (mine was to play golf, take walks with my wife and march in parades) you will progress forward everyday. You have to keep up your exercises at home, allowing at least an hour or two for this. The important thing is to WALK. Until you can drive, get someone to walk around your neighborhood with you or take you to a mall and just walk around.

At the end of five weeks after the operation I marched two miles in a parade (I'm a volunteer fireman) and at the same time went back to active duty answering alarms. After two months I was playing nine holes of golf walking and pulling a cart.

I can now walk 18 holes of golf, walk 2 to 4 miles, do all the activities that I did before, only now without pain. I'm so glad I did it.

## **Partial knee replacement**

### **A.S., 71 year old man with Osteoarthritis**

Although I weigh around 260 pounds and am rather obese, I have always been athletically inclined. I have been doing high mileage bicycle riding for about the past 20 years. In 2003 at age 71, I developed pain and swelling in my right knee. After taking pain medications having my knee tapped several times, my rheumatologist told me about Dr. Macaulay at Columbia and I am an appointment with him. He told me I was a good candidate for a partial knee replacement and that this is less invasive surgery with faster recovery time than total knee replacement. I had the operation performed on December 1, 2003 and was out of the hospital 2 days later. I've had previous orthopedic surgeries, including two lamonectomies and the operation and care I received for knee surgery at Columbia was excellent. They gave me easy to follow post surgery instruction. I was walking without a walker at home with a cane within a week and was in rehab for 2 weeks after which time I was riding and exercising and walking without pain.

After about a month, I started riding a bicycle again and during the year of 2004, I rode many thousands of miles. In September, I rode two 100-mile rides and on 80 miler without any problem with my knee. I worked out all winter 2004 and 2005 at a gym and had no problem and I am now back riding for distance.

I am totally pleased with Dr. Macaulay, Columbia University Medical Center and the whole team involved in knee replacement there.

I am pain free and yes I am still obese and active. I don't even think about my knee, in fact I think it's better than the other one. If I have any trouble, I will not hesitate to go back to Dr. Macaulay and his fine staff at Columbia University Center for Hip and Knee Replacement.

Thanks Dr. Macaulay for giving me back my lifestyle.

## **Knee Arthroscopy**

### **C.I., 39 year old man with Meniscal Tear**

I am a Emergency Room physician at Columbia University Medical Center, who myself experienced the medical world from the patient's side one year ago.

In my case, I had developed pain in my right knee. I had been very active all my life -- all sports imaginable. Jogging, though, in Central Park I began to feel pain on the inner side of my right knee which worsened by a three day hike in the mountains of Peru.

I knew well enough that I had hurt my meniscus and went about treating it in the appropriately "conservative" manner. For six months I rested the knee, took NSAIDs, attempted some exercises, but the pain didn't resolve, especially on stairs.

I made arrangements to see Dr. Macaulay, got an MRI and we confirmed a tear of the meniscus which was of a nature that required surgery.

The operation was scheduled with little delay. I arrived one morning in the ambulatory surgical suite where I changed into hospital garments, was interviewed by the nurses and residents assigned to my case, and with no delay was brought to the operating room and painlessly given "spinal anesthesia" effectively removing all sensation in my lower limbs.

I was alert through the procedure and was even able to watch on the monitor the procedure's progress. In no time it was over, my leg was wrapped and I was in the "recovery room" waiting for

sensation to return to my lower half. Within an hour I was walking out of the hospital with only a token arm for support.

My leg felt exactly no pain the entire day such that perhaps unadvisedly I shopped and later attended a dinner party. That night I used "pain killers" and ice preemptively but as it turned out did not need either thereafter.

Two weeks later I felt so good that again perhaps unadvisedly I attempted a little jog. It felt good so the next day I went further. This time I went perhaps too far and began to have small twinges of discomfort-- my body rightfully reminding me that even after the best of operations the body has a recuperative period.

Today, some one year later, I cannot remember which leg was operated on. I skied through the winter, have hiked over the most rugged of terrain. I have not resumed running, though, but this because I'm not sure I ever really enjoyed running anyway.

