

Even Doctors Become Handicapped By Knee Pain

Florida podiatrist returns to active lifestyle after successful MAKOplasty® procedure



Dr. Harvey Saff had been a life-long runner and lives a very active lifestyle. A podiatrist practicing in Pompano Beach, FL, Dr. Saff had participated in five marathons, ran four to five miles a day and worked out often at the gym. But, in early 2006, he started having problems with his left knee.

He would have such sharp pains in his knee that he would have to hold on to someone or something to even stand up. This resulted in a distinctive change in his active lifestyle and it became unbearable one weekend when he and his wife traveled to New York.

"It was embarrassing," he said. "I had to hold on to the rails with both hands in order to get up or down the subway

stairs. I decided that I had to do something before it became any worse."

After he returned from his trip, Dr. Saff decided to visit Dr. Martin Roche, an orthopedic surgeon at Holy Cross Hospital in Fort Lauderdale, FL, to see what could be done about his knee pain. During his first visit, Dr. Roche performed a full examination and discovered that Dr. Saff had developed osteoarthritis in one section of his knee. Although a previous arthroscopic surgery had helped with knee pain in Dr. Saff's other knee, Dr. Roche said there was a good chance that the same surgery would only serve as a temporary fix and a knee replacement procedure might be necessary down the road.

"We decided to go ahead with the arthroscopic surgery to prolong the time I had before I needed knee replacement surgery," Dr. Saff said. "After the arthroscopic surgery, my knee felt better for a while, but I was still uncomfortable and could still not run at all."

Soon, the sharp pains returned in Dr. Saff's knee.

"I felt handicapped with pain," he said. "I had sharp pains in my right knee sporadically, so I was always guarded and fearful of when the pain would return. At that time, I was constantly living in a state of anticipation waiting for the pain. It really put restrictions on the activities I could do and how I lived my life."

Dr. Saff went back to the Holy Cross Orthopedic Institute where Dr. Roche told him about a unique operation for patients with knee problems similar

to Dr. Saff's. The procedure, called MAKOplasty®, was much less invasive than a traditional knee replacement and utilized a robotic arm system to ensure the implant was precisely fitted to the patient's body.

"I felt handicapped with pain."

"Being a doctor myself, I knew there were advantages to the procedure," Dr. Saff said. "Because the damage was primarily in one compartment of my knee, the procedure would allow me to keep more of my natural knee joint and leave more of the tissue, cartilage and muscle around my knee untouched. I decided to go ahead with the new procedure even though I was just the fifth patient on whom it had been performed."

After the MAKOplasty® procedure, Dr. Saff said he felt very little discomfort. He was dismissed from the hospital and no longer needed pain medication just 24 hours after the surgery.

"Sometimes when I am walking, it feels so comfortable that I have to stop and think which knee has an implant," he said.

Dr. Saff now walks or works out six days a week. Even though Dr. Roche cautioned him not to run, he is still able to use the stationary bike and elliptical orbiter at his gym. He said he can walk as much as he wants and has started taking pool therapy, which really helped him gain full range of motion after the surgery. He said he feels improvements

“Sometimes when I’m walking, it feels so comfortable I have to stop and think which knee has an implant.”

each and every time he gets out of the water after a pool therapy session.

“I’m now able to go up and down steps without holding on to the railing totally pain-free,” Dr. Saff said. “I no longer feel limited or cautious because of my

knee pain and discomfort. Now, I can do just about anything and everything I want – all physical activities except running as the increased gravitational forces create unnecessary stress on my knee joint.”

Your decision on whether or not to have a MAKOplasty® procedure is an important one, and the information provided here is not meant to substitute for the in-depth consultation you should have with your doctor. Only a licensed physician can adequately diagnose and explain your underlying orthopedic condition, the natural history of the condition without intervention, the MAKOplasty® procedure, the medically acceptable alternative procedures and the potential complications and risks of any procedure and/or operation.



Restoring Quality of Life Through Innovation®