



BARBARA & RAN LAWSON

Walking on LEVEL GROUND

*A Patient's Journey with a
Hip Joint Replacement by Michael Hellman, M.D.*

Barbara Lawson first met Dr. Michael Hellman on February 14, 2020, as she presented to his office for an evaluation of her right hip. She had just returned from Elbow Key, Bahamas from a mission trip, where she and her husband Ran were serving in the Christian Ministry – Samaritans Purse by helping tarp the roofs of homes damaged by Hurricane Dorian.

Barbara has always been an active person and she knew she needed to see a specialist when she got home from her mission trip as she loves helping and serving those who are in desperate need. As Barbara was helping clear debris from residential homes and using a ladder, she noted that her right hip was in pain. She had to rest at the hotel and was very uncomfortable on the plane ride home back to Windsor, Missouri. Barbara called her family doctor at Whiteman AFB and asked if she could get a referral to Rockhill Orthopaedic Specialists as her husband Ran had been a patient there before and was very happy with his results as well as the “Rockhill Experience,” (Collaborative orthopedic care customized for each individual patient).

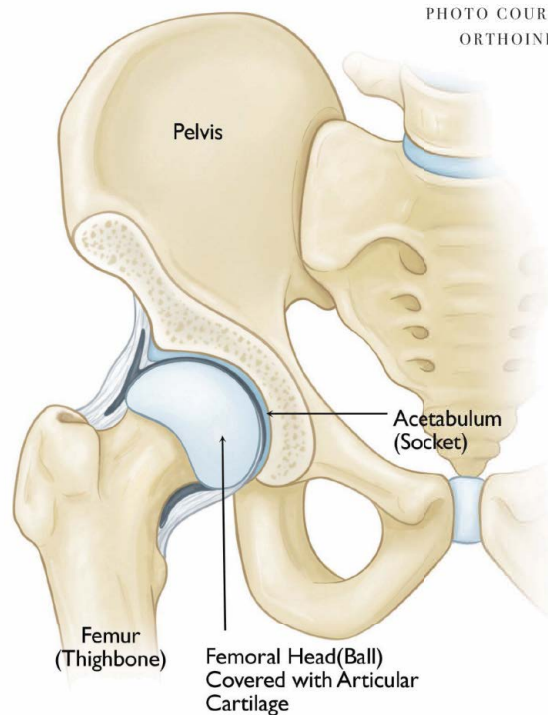


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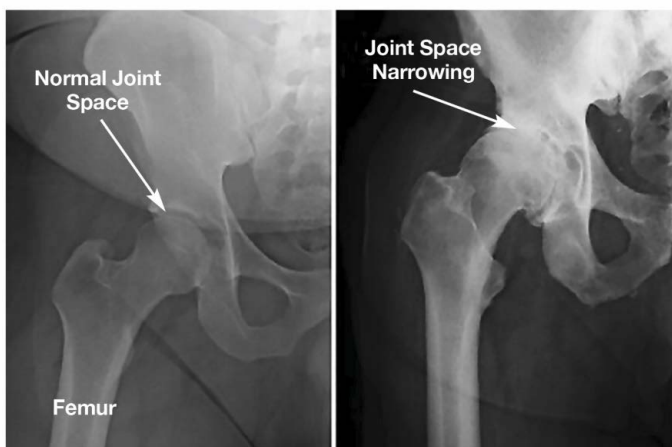


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Barbara called Rockhill Orthopedic Specialists and was scheduled to see Dr. Michael Hellman-joint replacement specialist for an evaluation of her hip pain. On the day of her appointment, Barbara checked in at the front desk, had x-rays taken of her right hip, and then she was taken to an exam room where Dr. Hellman introduced himself to Barbara and her husband Ran, who accompanied her to her visit. Dr. Hellman asked Barbara several questions about her hip pain, examined her right hip and then proceeded to explain to her that she had severe osteoarthritis of her hip joint and that she should consider a hip joint replacement.

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Barbara was shocked when Dr. Hellman told her she should think about a hip replacement, as she had never had a surgery before in her life. She immediately told him that surgery wasn't an option and then asked if they could pray about it. Dr. Hellman held



JASON DOUGLAS – PA,
BARBARA LAWSON
AND DR. MICHAEL HELLMAN

her hand and they prayed. Afterward, she and Dr. Hellman actively listened to each other about surgical and nonsurgical treatment options. Barbara also explained that she has always been a highly active person and that she was afraid of a surgical procedure. She reported that her hip pain had worsened over the past year and that she has tried over the counter anti-inflammatory medications

and physical therapy and now she is limping, using a cane, and has constant hip pain, which is preventing her from doing ministry work. Dr. Hellman explained that she could receive a cortisone shot, but that she was just prolonging the inevitable as her hip joint was worn out. If she wanted to continue going on mission trips, she would have to take some time for herself, have surgery, and heal. The purpose of the surgery would be so that she could resume helping others. Barbara wanted to think about what

Dr. Hellman had recommended for her and take some time to digest her options. She called back less than a week later to make an appointment to discuss the surgical procedure in detail and the associated rehabilitation she would need to adhere to in order to get the best outcome.

Barbara stated that Dr. Hellman explained everything in a very detailed and organized format, as he told her she was a candidate for minimally invasive anterior hip replacement surgery, since she was thinner, younger, healthier, and more motivated to participate in the rehabilitation process, compared to some patients who undergo the traditional surgery. He let her hold a model of the implant that she would have placed in her hip, and she could feel that it only weighed about 2 pounds.

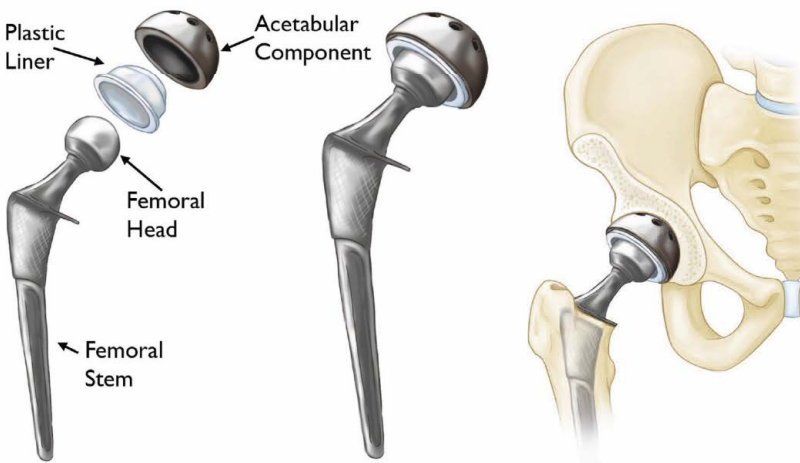


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Dr. Hellman's team arranged for her pre-op labs, post-op medications, and the home equipment that she would need for her rehab. He created a personalized medication list for her and explained how her activities of daily living would change for a short time after surgery. After a few months, she would begin gaining her strength and mobility back, so that she could resume her mission work. In March of 2020, COVID restrictions began to affect which patients could have a surgical procedure and hospitals asked their surgeons to do the patients who needed the procedures first and to ask those who weren't in as severe pain to wait a few months. Barbara was on the short list of patients who was selected to proceed with having her hip replaced, as she was in a lot of pain and she was a very healthy candidate, who would have a short hospital stay.

Barbara elected to have right hip replacement surgery on March 3, 2020 and was able to go home the next day. She was amazed that Dr. Hellman had even arranged for physical therapy to come to her home after surgery. The therapists worked with her three

times a week on goals around her home and property that enabled her to progress from a walker to a cane pretty quickly and then to just a gait belt. Barbara related her rehab to God's teachings as Psalm 143:10 – Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let my good Spirit lead me on level ground. Barbara's physical therapist began with having her walk around her home on firm surfaces, where it was safe for her to build up her strength, while protecting her new hip. Finally, she progressed to walking on uneven surfaces, such as gravel and walking paths around her farm.

Barbara had her first post-operative visit with Dr. Hellman on March 16th, and she was doing great! She had progressed to only anti-inflammatory medications, outpatient physical therapy, as well as icing her hip for pain. Two months after the procedure, Barbara was reporting that she was walking 2-4 miles and was not in pain. Dr. Hellman told her that he would see her at 12 months following the surgical procedure and to call his office if she had any questions.

In September of 2020, Barbara was able to serve with her husband Ran for Samaritans Purse by going to Louisiana and assisting in Hurricane Relief by tarping people's homes to protect them from the elements. In order to serve, Barbara has to have the stamina to be able to walk 4-6 miles daily around disaster sites, as well as be able to climb ladders to get on the roofs that need to be tarped. Barbara credits her ability to serve in disaster zones so quickly and minister God's word to those in need as part of the patient/surgeon collaboration that she had with Dr. Michael Hellman, as he understood her motivation to get better.



Michael Hellman, M.D. is a Fellowship trained Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon, who specializes in hip and knee replacement, as well as hip preservation surgery. Dr. Hellman prioritizes developing an accurate diagnosis and a treatment plan tailored to the goals and expectations of each patient he cares for. His practice includes muscle sparing anterior hip replacement, minimally invasive total knee and partial knee replacement, hip resurfacing, revision total hip and total knee replacement, hip arthroscopy, open hip surgery, and peri-acetabular osteotomy.

Dr. Hellman has research interests focusing on complex disorders of the hip and knee. He has published over 50 research articles and book chapters and has presented over 40 abstracts at national and international conferences. His belief is that a strong foundation in evidence-based medicine is the optimal way to provide the highest quality of care to every patient. ■



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THE ROCKHILL EXPERIENCE: ARE YOU A CANDIDATE FOR JOINT REPLACEMENT?

Do you suffer from severe hip pain that doesn't get better with medications, physical therapy, assistive devices, and modifications to your everyday activities? If so, you should make an appointment with one of Rockhill Orthopaedics joint specialists for an accurate diagnosis and a collaborative, customized orthopedic care plan for you.

According to AAOS-American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, hip and knee replacements are the most commonly performed joint replacement surgeries in the United States. It is important to obtain an accurate diagnosis as joint pain can be caused by arthritis, a fracture or a number of other conditions. If you are diagnosed with osteoarthritis and conservative treatment options are failing to keep you pain free and active, then a joint replacement may be for you.

Total Hip Replacement

Prepare - damaged cartilage and ball (upper end of the femur) are removed

Position - a new metal ball attached to a metal stem is fitted into the femur

Replace - a plastic socket is implanted into the pelvis, replacing the damaged socket

A minimally invasive procedure uses a smaller incision than a traditional hip replacement. This may lead to less pain and decreased recovery time. It is not yet clear if the procedure leads to a greater risk of complications. In some cases, you may have other surgical options, like total hip resurfacing. Talk with your provider about the risks and benefits of all your options.

Joint replacement can not only help relieve your pain, but enable you to have a more active and fulfilling life. Call 816-246-4302 to schedule an appointment with one of our joint replacement specialists, so that they can customize a surgical care plan for you!

Your surgical success will be dependent on your active participation in your rehabilitation. Finding the right surgeon who will provide you an accurate diagnosis, actively listen to your concerns and help create a customized care plan for you is the most important first step towards your success.

Doctor and patient partnered in the healing process!



Andrew Palmisano, M.D.



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