



**STURDY**  
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

## **The Advancements In Joint Surgery**

*Saul Magitsky, MD, Sturdy Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Associates*

When pain compels you to withdraw from a lifestyle you once loved, when it keeps you from playing with your grandkids, going to the store, or even getting out of bed, then that is the moment when your arthritis and pain are ruling you and your life. That is the moment to have something done.

According to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, seventy million Americans have arthritis, but only 600,000 joint replacement surgeries are performed in the U.S. each year. Because so many Americans with arthritis live with their debilitating joint pain, thinking that surgery is either too risky or not right for them, orthopedic surgeons like Dr. Saul Magitsky, of Sturdy Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Associates (SOSMA), are educating patients about the pain-relieving, lifestyle-restoring benefits of joint replacement surgery, and the advantages of seeking treatment without delay.

The principal reason for performing total joint replacement or reconstruction surgery is to relieve the pain and disability caused by severe arthritis. "Arthritis leads to pain and pain leads to immobility," says Dr. Magitsky. "Immobility leads to contracture, or stiffening of the soft tissues in the joints."

According to Dr. Magitsky, "Joint replacement surgery substitutes painful arthritic bone and cartilage tissue with innovative materials to restore motion and alleviate pain. Virtually all degrees of arthritis can be helped. However, better post-operative results, in terms of recovery periods and motion, can be archived in patients who undergo joint replacements while they still have good joint mobility. Patients can regain mobility the day of their total hip and total knee replacements, putting full weight on their legs, and walking, with physical therapy."

### **Minimally Invasive Surgery**

Fear of post-operative discomfort causes many people to postpone joint surgery. On the contrary, "the only discomfort caused by the surgery comes from the healing tissues, which are much less traumatized with minimally invasive surgery, or MIS," says Dr. Magitsky. "Whereas the incisions used to range from 10 to 12 inches long, now they are averaging from three to five inches for both hip and knee replacement surgeries." After Dr. Magitsky earned his medical degree from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, he completed his Adult Joint Reconstruction fellowship at the Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, where he received training in MIS procedures from leading surgeons who developed the procedure. Surgeons like Dr. Magitsky perform MIS because it "is a less-traumatic approach not only to the skin, but also to the muscles and the tendons underneath the skin, contributing to quicker recovery times for patients post-surgery."

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### **Joint Replacement Candidates**

Many people with arthritic joint pain delay surgery because they believe they are not good candidates. According to Dr. Magitsky, "In actuality, only those rare individuals who are so medically unstable—those who have severe heart problems or other medical conditions that make it impossible for them to go under anesthesia—are not good candidates for joint replacement surgery. Everyone else who has life-limiting pain from arthritis, with loss of function, is a candidate and can be helped."

### **Better-Wear Materials**

In the past, second surgeries were necessary as early as five years after the first to replace the artificial joints of the first surgery. In order for patients to minimize the number of revisions they had to have, they would delay the initial procedure for as long as possible. "Because we now have significantly better materials for joints and better techniques for putting them in, we expect our joints to last, on average, 15 to 20 years before a second procedure needs to be done," says Dr. Magitsky. "We have new plastics that have significantly better wear characteristics, meaning they wear out much more slowly." Dr. Magitsky is also the only surgeon in the area to use components designed specifically for women. He learned the techniques in Chicago from the surgeons who designed these innovative systems.

### **Joint Replacement: A Solution to Pain**

Joint replacement surgery, though not a cure for arthritis, is a solution to the pain caused by the disease. "Minimally invasive surgery facilitates faster recoveries; better, high-wear plastics delay the need for second surgeries; and gender-specific components allow for better comfort for individual bone structure. The surgery has excellent results, removes pain, and returns the function of joints and limbs that have become useless because of this incapacitating pain," says Dr. Magitsky. Because patients can quickly recover and return to their lives, joint replacement surgery is not something to be feared, or to postpone. Anyone, at any age or activity level, can experience joint pain, but no one has to suffer. Whether joint pain is experienced when climbing a rock wall or a set of stairs, pain is pain, and is the body's way of signifying the presence of a problem and the need for medical attention.

Dr. Magitsky is accepting new patients. Appointments can be made by calling (508) 226-2213. The practice also offers x-ray and physical therapy services. Most insurance plans are accepted.

SOSMA is one of 13 practices that make up Sturdy Memorial Associates (SMA), and its physicians are associated with Sturdy Memorial Hospital.

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