

on the *move*

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Attacking the Pain of Joint Replacement Surgery from all Angles

Gail K. remembers well the pain her mother endured following her knee replacement surgery in the mid-1980s. So six months ago when the Farmingdale office manager began limping from “bone-on-bone” arthritis of her left knee, she wanted to avoid surgery at all costs. When over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications were of no use, she consulted an orthopedist who recommended a series of cortisone and other joint injections to ease the pain and stiffness.

“The pain didn’t go away, and I had a hard time walking,” she said. “My doctor told me the pain wouldn’t improve and that I needed surgery.” Reluctantly, she agreed to undergo a knee replacement on Jan. 22. But within a few hours of her surgery, she was out of bed and walking. “I really didn’t have much pain,” Gail recalled.

That’s because doctors at South Nassau’s Long Island Joint Replacement Institute treat pain before, during and after joint replacement surgery with a variety of medications and techniques to not only ease patients’ postoperative discomfort, but to also prevent complications and aid in a faster rehabilitation and recovery.

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Improving Quality of Life

With Quadruple Joint Replacement



Audrey Crawford gets her stride back after quadruple joint replacement surgery.

For nearly 20 years, Audrey Crawford, 62, suffered from the crippling pain of osteoarthritis. By 2013, the discomfort of her chronic degenerative joint disease that affected her hips and knees challenged her ability to climb a flight of stairs to her office," recalled the now retired New York State Supreme Court judge who said her mother was deformed and bedridden by the disease. "I could have used a cane, but I was too proud to walk with one."

Doctors treated her with gel injections and recommended physical therapy, which provided short-term relief. "Once medications and physical therapy no longer help to alleviate the pain," said Bradley Gerber, MD, director of total joint replacement at South Nassau Communities Hospital, "it's time to consider other options, namely, joint replacement surgery."

Crawford is one of 27 million Americans suffering from osteoarthritis, according to the Arthritis Foundation, and one of nearly 700,000 Americans who undergo hip or knee replacement each year. Osteoarthritis can affect any joint, but it occurs primarily in the knees, hips, fingers, toes, lower back and neck.

"Osteoarthritis is one of the most common joint issues we see and it's a disease that affects people of all ages," Dr. Gerber said. "Joint replacement of the knees and hips are the most common replacements."

After a colleague recommended that Crawford consult Dr. Gerber at South Nassau, the Brooklyn native, who is now a resident of a Richmond, Va., suburb, underwent left hip replacement surgery in June 2014. After four months of physical therapy, he repeated the procedure on her right side and then turned to her knees.

Seven months have passed since her joint replacement surgery and Crawford has gained flexibility and motion in her knees and hips. Most important, she is now pain-free and back at the gym. "Dr. Gerber is the best, he has such a nice bedside manner he put me first and kept me safe," she said. "I would recommend him to anyone. Today I feel like I can walk and not be limited by how far or where I can go. I no longer have to be embarrassed by not being able to function. Plus, I have dropped several dress sizes." ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT with Dr. Gerber, please call South Nassau's Long Island Joint Replacement Institute at **888-91-REPLACE (888-917-3752)** or visit **www.southnassauortho.org**.

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Except where noted, models are used in photos and their appearance here is not reflective of a specific disease profile.

Managing Pain of Joint Replacement

Continued from cover

"Before the surgery, we preemptively use a combination of pain control drugs, including an anti-inflammatory agent, acetaminophen, a low-dose narcotic pain reliever and pain blockers injected around the nerves in the joint," explained James Germano, MD, of South Nassau's Long Island Joint Replacement Institute and chief of the hip service, who performed Gail's procedure. "Each drug has a different mechanism of action, which is more effective in managing pain and reducing the amount of anesthesia we have to give the patient."

But pain control doesn't end there. During the procedure, doctors administer a nerve block, which is a numbing medication like Novocain, and a long-acting anesthetic agent. And following the procedure, patients receive an anti-inflammatory agent, acetaminophen and a low dose of a short-acting narcotic pain reliever.

Intravenous pain medication or pain pumps, which release a small amount of pain reliever at the touch of a button, are not part of the pain management regimen unless patients request it, explained Dr. Germano. "Patients are not groggy from the medication, which helps them get out of bed faster, resulting in fewer postoperative complications," he said. "The point behind the multimodal pain control is that we can attack pain in multiple layers by targeting different steps in the pain pathway. Medications block pain at the site, at the nerve and in the brain."

The goal of pain management after joint replacement surgery is to achieve a tolerable level of discomfort, explained South Nassau's Long Island Joint Replacement Institute's Bradley Gerber, MD, chief of total joint replacement surgery. "It's easier to prevent pain before it starts than to manage pain once it becomes severe," he said. "It can be managed much more effectively when multiple methods of pain control are used."

Within a week of Gail's surgery, she was driving and walking up and down stairs in her apartment. "People will tell you you'll have so much pain after the surgery and it will take a month to get around," Gail said. "I hope others who need this surgery will go through it because it really wasn't bad." ■

"It's easier to prevent pain before it starts than to manage pain once it becomes severe."

*Bradley Gerber, MD
chief of total joint replacement surgery*

Center for Advanced Orthopedics Surgeons

Bradley Gerber, MD



Dr. Gerber is a national leader in hip resurfacing procedures and fellowship-trained in adult reconstruction.

Recognized for his use of leading-edge techniques in all areas of total hip and knee surgery, Dr. Gerber is chief of total joint replacement surgery at South Nassau Communities Hospital. He was named as one of the "Best Orthopedic Surgeons" on Long Island by the Long Island Press' Best of Long Island poll for 2011 and 2012.

James A. Germano, MD



Dr. Germano is chief of hip service at South Nassau.

He is a board-certified, fellowship-trained orthopedist who sub-specializes in total hip and knee replacement

with a special interest in revision arthroplasty. He is skilled in minimally invasive and computer-assisted surgery as well as alternative bearing surgery. He is also one of Long Island's only hip arthroscopy specialists, allowing him to treat almost any hip problem, regardless of age.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

with Dr. Germano or Dr. Gerber, please call South Nassau's Long Island Joint Replacement Institute at **888-91-REPLACE (888-917-3752)** or visit **www.southnassauortho.org**.

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FREE Pre-Surgery Joint Replacement Education Classes

Free parking is available.

2016 CLASSES are held in Conference Room B, unless otherwise noted.

July 28	12 noon – 1:30 p.m.
August 4	6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
August 11	12 noon – 1:30 p.m.
August 25	12 noon – 1:30 p.m.
September 1	6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
September 8	12 noon – 1:30 p.m.

September 22	12 noon – 1:30 p.m.
October 6	6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
October 13	12 noon – 1:30 p.m.
October 27	12 noon – 1:30 p.m. Conference Room C
November 3	6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

*Dates and times are subject to change.
Please call to confirm.*

TO REGISTER, please call 516-632-3924 or online at:
www.southnassau.org/orthopedics/onlineapp.cfm

Community Service Plan Available

New York hospitals are required by both state and federal governments to conduct a community health needs assessment every three years and, as a result of that assessment, develop a Community Service Plan to respond to the community's health needs with a strategy to address them. You can access the hospital's second-year plan at southnassau.org by clicking on "About Us." You'll find the document listed under the "Get to Know Us" tab. You can also pick up a printed copy from the hospital's External Affairs office in Baldwin at 2277 Grand Avenue.

