



## Joint Surgery Helps a Local Woman Stay Active

At 77, Catherine Pastor of Manahawkin is as active as ever. At least three days a week she volunteers with the Emergency Department at Southern Ocean Medical Center, aiding the nursing staff and serving meals.

She exercises at The Ocean Club fitness center — swimming and lifting weights — another three days a week. And she spends as much time as she can playing with her 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Catherine attributes her energetic lifestyle in part to her orthopedic surgeon at Southern Ocean, Samuel Epstein, D.O.

Over the past 13 years, Dr. Epstein has repaired injuries in her right shoulder, both knees, and, most recently, her left shoulder.

### 'Popping' Sensation a Serious Injury

The most recent injury occurred in spring 2009, when Catherine decided to bump up her weights by a pound. As she was lifting the heavier weight, she felt a pop in her left shoulder.

"I knew that the popping sound wasn't good, but I didn't feel any pain for about a week," Catherine says.

Soon, an ache in her shoulder kept her from sleeping on her left side. She knew it was time to call Dr. Epstein.

He ordered an MRI, which revealed that Catherine had torn her rotator cuff, a group of muscles and tendons

Catherine Pastor, shown at left with husband, Ken, has turned to Southern Ocean Medical Center for several tune-ups over the years, including her most recent: surgery to repair a torn rotator cuff.



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that keep the ball of the shoulder joint in the socket.

### Advanced Technology Cuts Down on Complications

In December 2009, Dr. Epstein performed arthroscopic surgery to repair Catherine's shoulder. This minimally invasive technique involved making several small incisions around the joint. Dr. Epstein first inserted an arthroscope, a special instrument that projects a video image of the joint onto a monitor. Then, using the image on the screen as his guide, he repaired her shoulder using tiny, less invasive instruments.

"Compared with traditional open surgery, arthroscopic surgery allows for quicker recovery, less blood loss, less postoperative pain, lower risk for infection, and smaller scars," Dr. Epstein says.

### Back to Active in Weeks

Within 12 weeks, Catherine had resumed many of her favorite activities, such as gardening and volunteering. "I can't say enough about Dr. Epstein," Catherine says. "He's one of the most skilled and respected surgeons at Southern Ocean. He's a very busy doctor, yet he always takes all the time that he needs when he's with patients."

Because of Dr. Epstein, Catherine says, she hasn't slowed down one bit. "But now I know to keep my weights low while exercising," she adds. "I realize I'm not Superwoman." ●

**How Much Do You Know About Arthritis?** Join us at the Family Resource Center at the Ocean Club on July 15 to get updates on the latest arthritis research, treatment options, and more. See page 21 for details.