

A **New Approach** to Hip Surgery

Keyport resident John Mocci III struggled with hip pain for nearly a year and a half. John developed arthritis and suffered from a buildup of fluid that made it difficult to work without pain. His left hip simply “wore out” from years working as a painter, he says.

Since John was only 49, his doctor wanted to try options other than a hip replacement. He tried cortisone shots, and he had the fluid drained,

but nothing worked. After a hip arthroscopy procedure left him with even less use of his left leg and just as much pain, John needed to alleviate his hip pain and get back to work.

His doctor referred him to David Lopez, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon affiliated with Riverview Medical Center, who specializes in minimally invasive surgery. Only a handful of orthopedic surgeons in the New Jersey area are equipped to perform



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the advanced surgery. Fortunately for John, Dr. Lopez was one of them.

“In general, with hip replacement surgery, there’s been a trend over the years to do the procedures through either smaller incisions or muscle-sparing techniques,” Dr. Lopez says. “This procedure accomplishes both.”

The direct anterior hip replacement can “eliminate some of the restrictions that more traditional hip replacements might have after surgery, like sitting in cars or in chairs,” Dr. Lopez says. “It also allows the surgeon to more accurately restore the length of the leg after surgery, which is a primary concern for the function of the hip and its stability.”

This technique would provide John with better hip function, the ability to work, and a lower risk for dislocations, as well as possibly allow longer use of his new hip. The less invasive procedure meant John could be up and about immediately after his surgery at Riverview in February 2011. “I was doing physical therapy the next day in the hospital,” says John.

With the help of physical therapy, he was back on the job in two months. Today, John has no problem climbing up and down ladders at work. And he says that Dr. Lopez told him that within six to seven months, “you won’t even know you had surgery.”

John credits Dr. Lopez’s expertise and the professional, friendly staff at Riverview Medical Center for helping him get back on his feet fast. ●

A painter by day, John Mocci III has been a volunteer firefighter in Aberdeen for more than 30 years. A minimally invasive hip replacement procedure at Riverview and a short stint in physical therapy got him back to both jobs quickly.



A Little Help from Our Pets Keep an eye out for four-footed friends at Riverview. They’re part of a new animal-assisted therapy program the Medical Center is piloting. Research shows animal visits may help improve patient outcomes. Visit www.RiverviewMedicalCenter.com/pettherapy to learn more.