

RIVERBENDER.COM

Minimally invasive hip surgery improves quality of life for area florist

April 14 2015 1:48 PM



ALTON - As a florist, Peggy Reynolds spends all day on her feet, lifting heavy floral arrangements, waiting on customers and making sure her business, Peg's Flower Cottage in Jerseyville, is up and running.

But for several years, she was suffering from osteoarthritis in both of her hips, and it was becoming debilitating for her. She wondered if she could keep up with the demands of such a physical job.

"I was to the point where I couldn't lift my legs into the car, and I was afraid I was going to end up in a wheelchair," Reynolds says. "My quality of life was horrible. Words can't explain it."

When she was able to gain insurance through the Affordable Care Act, Reynolds, 56, says she began looking into relief through hip replacement surgery. She talked to a surgeon in St. Louis and asked friends for recommendations.

"I had heard about Dr. John Stirton at Alton Memorial Hospital from friends and an article in House Calls," she says. "I knew he did a procedure through the front of the hip that would not require any muscle cutting and therefore the recovery was quicker than a traditional hip replacement. That was what I wanted."

Dr. Stirton, an orthopedic surgeon at AMH since 2013, specializes in knee and hip replacements. He is one of the few surgeons in the area who currently does a minimally invasive, direct anterior total hip arthroplasty. This total hip replacement approach involves a smaller incision and prevents the cutting of tendons and muscle.

Although Reynolds required a total hip replacement in both hips and there are some patients who can have the procedure done at the same time, Dr. Stirton recommended she have two separate procedures because of other health concerns.

"With this procedure, patients have less post-operative pain, earlier discharge from the hospital and quicker rehab," Dr. Stirton says. "In her case, because she had such a quick recovery after her first surgery, we could do the second one a lot closer than most patients."



Reynolds underwent her first procedure on her right, or “worst,” hip on May 28, 2014, and her second surgery on the left hip on Sept. 22.

“I was only in the hospital one night after my first surgery and two nights after the second due to my blood pressure,” she says. “I had two major surgeries within a matter

of four months, but I was up using a walker on the same day as surgery both times. After my second hip replacement, I was able to go to church only six days later.”

Reynolds says she knew what to expect after her first surgery and believes it was important for her to take time to heal and rest. As part of her recovery, a nurse and physical therapist visited her regularly from BJC Home Health.

“I had never had major surgery before, and I was very apprehensive,” Reynolds said. “You have to trust your doctor. After I met Dr. Stirton, I felt good about my decision. He takes his time with you and you know he listens to you.”

Reynolds had regular exams following her surgeries and will continue to be seen by Dr. Stirton on an annual basis. She also cannot say enough about the staff at AMH, where she worked for many years before starting her own business.

“Everyone at the hospital was great,” she says. “They strive for excellence, and they achieved it.”

Today, Reynolds works out at the local wellness center in Jerseyville, swims and stays busy with her daughter and her business.

“I have had so many people see my progress, I’d recommend this procedure and Dr. Stirton to everybody,” she says. “I have my life back.”

Dr. Stirton is a member of BJC Medical Group and on staff at Alton Memorial Hospital. His practice, Alton Orthopedic Clinic, is located at 4 Memorial Drive, Building B, Suite 130, Alton, Ill, and can be reached by calling (618) 463-7600.