



After anterior hip replacement, Diane Kelly enjoys a game of bean bag toss with her grandson, Ryan. Just 10 days after surgery, she no longer needed a walker or cane.

A new approach to hip replacement

Less pain, faster recovery

In 2007, Diane Kelly of Richfield had her left hip replaced and needed to take a month off work to recover. It was six months before the active grandmother felt like herself again and could resume her normal lifestyle.

Two years ago, Kelly started having similar arthritis pain in her right hip. Her surgeon, Owen O'Neill, MD, of Twin Cities Orthopedics Shakopee, gave her cortisone shots. She kept up favorite activities like aerobics and spending time at the family's seasonal camper site near Brainerd. Still, her right hip slowly worsened.

A SMALLER INCISION FROM THE FRONT

Meanwhile, O'Neill had started using a new anterior approach to hip replacement, with great results. Traditional hip replacement procedures performed from the side or back require that muscles be cut. The anterior approach involves a smaller incision in the front of the hip, meaning that muscles can simply be moved during the surgery.

"Dr. O'Neill said I was a good candidate for the anterior surgery, and St. Francis Regional Medical Center had the special surgical table that's required," Kelly said.

On Nov. 5, 2012, O'Neill used the anterior technique at St. Francis and gave Kelly, 70, a new right hip.

"I was in the hospital for two days and went home with no restrictions," Kelly said. "There was much less pain than the first time. My scar is five inches long — half as long as the other one."

As soon as she came home from the hospital, Kelly could get in and out of bed without help. In 10 days, she no longer needed a walker or cane. She faithfully did physical therapy exercises, all at home.

ASTOUNDING RESULTS

O'Neill, one of just a few Twin Cities surgeons currently using the anterior approach, traveled to 10 different locations to master the procedure. It is now the only technique he uses.

"It's more difficult than standard techniques. But the results are astounding," he said. "There is more accurate placement of parts because you use real-time imaging and can also check during the procedure to make sure the leg lengths are exactly equal."

Recovery from anterior approach hip replacement takes about eight weeks, said O'Neill. Patients are able to go straight home, avoiding the eight to 12 weeks of movement restriction that are common with standard hip replacement surgery.

Considering surgery?

To learn more about joint replacement or to make an appointment, visit TCOmn.com or call Twin Cities Orthopedics Shakopee at **952-456-7410**.