



Atlas Helps Knee Surgery Patient

Go The Distance

After 20 Gate River Runs and years of competitive tennis and volleyball, Annie White had put a lot of wear and tear on her knees. When she finally underwent knee replacement surgery, it was her competitive spirit – nurtured by the therapists at Atlas Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine – that kept her recovery on track.

“I struggled with the prospect of knee replacement surgery for a year and a half,” says White, a Mandarin resident. “I thought it would be the end of my active life. As it turned out, the total knee replacement has been the beginning of a new life, and I’m doing everything I did before.”

“The surgical procedure performed on Annie White’s right knee is called minimally invasive total knee replacement,” explains orthopedic surgeon R. David Heekin, M.D., FACS. “We use the same components as a standard total knee replacement but with a smaller than normal incision. This minimizes trauma to the muscles and other soft tissues, and can lead to less postoperative pain, earlier return of quadriceps function and quicker functional recovery than conventional total knee replacement.”

White began working with Atlas physical therapist and certified athletic trainer Mark Baughman, MPT, ATC/L the day after surgery. “From the very beginning, we knew Annie was very unique. She is incredibly motivated and our entire therapy program was very patient-driven,” says Baughman.

The sports focus of therapy at Atlas was a good match for White’s needs, says Baughman. “We started by helping her regain her range of motion and knee flexion, and we used some biofeedback to help her reeducate her quadriceps muscles. Then we moved on to functional sport-specific exercises. This involved a lot of agility and side-to-side work. Typical exercise equipment only moves in a straight plane, so including the side-to-side movement helps a patient, especially an athletic one, get back to normal activities faster.”

White had been to Atlas before, after she had rotator cuff surgery. “I regained 100 percent of the use of my shoulder after therapy at Atlas, so I was confident that I’d have good results with my knee too,” she says. “After the knee replacement surgery, I told my therapists I wanted them to push me to the limit, and they did. It was

painful at times, but because they knew I had high goals for myself, they pushed me harder than they would most people.”

“Ms. White’s goals for recovery were pain relief and return of knee strength and mobility to facilitate tennis and other activities with her family,” says Heekin. “She had planned to be back on the tennis court between six and twelve weeks after surgery.”

White exceeded those goals by a surprising margin. “Two weeks and three days after my knee replacement, I walked two miles,” she says. “At three weeks and three days, I played golf. At five weeks, I started back on my bowling league. I did all these things in addition to going to work. And while I won’t be doing long distance running, I do have plans to walk the River Run route.”

“The sports medicine focus at Atlas was a strong catalyst in enabling Ms. White to achieve her postoperative goals,” says Heekin. “The tailored rehabilitation program, excellent equipment and individual attention which she received from the experts at Atlas were instrumental in helping her achieve her goals. At Atlas, she experienced physical therapy provided by competent, caring and enthusiastic therapists who constantly challenged her and encouraged her to maximize her potential to achieve the highest level of function after surgery.”

“The atmosphere at Atlas is wonderful,” says White. “The facility is neat and clean and the therapists’ professionalism is wonderful. Even though the therapy was the hardest I’ve ever gone through, I made it fun for them, and they made it

fun for me too. I can bend my right knee just as well as my left knee now – some patients never regain that full bend. Dr. Heekin was thrilled. When I finished therapy I asked him, ‘how soon can I play tennis and volleyball?’ He said ‘today!’”

Atlas Physical Therapy accepts most insurance plans. Hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and Saturdays 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Atlas Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine helps athletes and patients of all ages and abilities get back to work and everyday living. Among the therapy advantages offered are:

- * Post-op Procedures including Total Joint Replacement
- * Aquatic Therapy
- * Electro-therapy
- * Ultrasound
- * Soft Tissue Mobilization/Massage
- * Joint Mobilization
- * Mechanical Traction
- * Therapeutic Exercise & Passive Range of Motion
- * Isokinetic Testing and Exercise
- * Aerobic and Cardiovascular Exercise
- * Gait Training
- * Biofeedback
- * Hydrotherapy
- * Comprehensive Women’s Therapy



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