

Meet the Hip and Knee Doc

By Sheryl Sowell

Don't let those painful hips and knees take the fun out of your summer, help is just a phone call away! Dr. Ron LaButti has helped thousands of patients in Oklahoma lose their hip or knee pain and restore their active lifestyle. One of only a handful of fellowship trained joint reconstruction surgeons in Tulsa, he has developed the reputation of he's the "doctor" other doctors trust for themselves and their family. Here, Dr. LaButti answers a few common questions he receives from prospective patients.

You're known as the "Hip and Knee Doc." Do you treat other body parts?

While my specialty is hips and knees, I will typically treat most body parts with the exception of the hand or elbow. One of the benefits of being in a large group is that I have the ability to refer my patients to one of my partners if they require treatment that is beyond the scope of my expertise. Those specialties include spine, hand, sports and rehabilitation medicine.

If a patient doesn't want surgery can you help them?

For patients in the beginning stages of arthritis I use a combination of physical therapy, injections, non-steroidal



Dr. Ronald S. LaButti is known as the "Hip and Knee Doc" of the Tulsa metropolitan area.

anti-inflammatory medicines, glucosamine/chondroitin sulfate and life style modifications. These treatments can alleviate pain for months or several years. Unfortunately when a patient comes in with bone on bone, severe arthritis, the only solution I have to offer them is a new hip or knee. It's pretty common to see a patient limp into my office after being on pain medications for several

years without ever having seen a specialist. I tell folks that if you have hip or knee pain, don't wait to see an orthopedist.

If someone is afraid of surgery, what do you tell them?

I explain to my patients the benefits and risks of the surgery, and describe what would happen if they did nothing. Anxiety over surgery is usually lessened when I explain exactly what can be expected before the

surgery, at the hospital and during recovery.

Speaking with patients and giving them the power to engage in their own care is a major deterrent to pre-surgery anxiety. I ensure that my patients have reasonable expectations. If they go into surgery thinking there will be no pain and that everything will be "peaches and cream," that is when they run into trouble. I try to outline as thoroughly as possible what their part in recovery is and how attainable their expectations are.

I do not pressure my patients into surgery and I encourage them to go home and discuss it with their family first before making a decision. My patients know going into surgery they have 24 hour access to me. They are given my pager, cell phone and home phone number for them and their family to contact me if they have any concerns.

Will the pain disappear after surgery and how important is post-operative physical therapy?

When the patient is moved to recovery I will order medication to control their pain. Most of my patients go home within 48 hours after surgery with prescriptions for narcotics to relieve their pain. Physical ther-

apy is an important part of the recovery process. I explain to my patients they must participate in physical therapy, especially with knee replacement. **What do you like most about your job?**

I chose to specialize in joint replacement because the results are often dramatic. Many patients are barely able to walk down the hall to their appointment when they arrive. They are in constant pain and have a limp. It's extremely gratifying to be able to help them get back to a pain-free, active lifestyle.

If you would like to learn more about Dr. LaButti please visit his website at www.hipandkneedoc.com. Dr. LaButti understands if you're in pain, you don't want to be seen. You can schedule an appointment online via his website or you can call his office at (918) 528-4780.

For more information, contact
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