

Walking the Same Day After Receiving a New Hip – A New Orthopedic Era Arrives in Chicago

Nationally, the average hip replacement patient spends three days in the hospital and three months out of work. That wasn't fast enough for Steven R. of Hoffman Estates. The 60-year-old says, "I walked out of the hospital the day after surgery and a few weeks later I was back to my old self."

The key was a new hip replacement operation called Direct Anterior Approach. Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Daniel Kuesis says, "A Direct Anterior Approach allows us to operate by pushing aside, instead of cutting through, the hip's overlaying muscles. The result is less pain, a faster recovery, and a dramatically lower risk of dislocations—the number one complication." Dr. Kuesis is the founder of Core Orthopedics & Sports Medicine and the Chairman of Orthopedics at Alexian Brothers Medical Center. An early adopter of the new approach, he now uses it with 75 percent of his hip replacement patients. Most orthopedic surgeons don't yet offer the procedure because it has less room to operate, requires special instruments and a custom operating table.

"I read about this operation on the internet," says Steven, "but I had to see several orthopedic surgeons before I finally found someone who performed it. Dr. Kuesis is on the cutting edge of a revolution in total joint surgery, one that reduces hospital stays and offers the fastest possible recovery. This new priority has been driven partly by younger patients who demand a quick return to their jobs and active lives. "Our patients want to get back to work and activities like tennis and golfing as soon as possible," Dr. Kuesis says.

Core Orthopedics & Sports Medicine focuses not only on the operation itself, but every phase of pre-op and post-op care. Before their surgeries, patients attend a special class describing what to expect at every stage of their hospital stays and recoveries. The goals are to align expectations and ease normal pre-op anxieties. Dr. Kuesis says, "Patients who attend the preoperative class are more at ease during their hospital stay and know what to expect after surgery."

While traditional hip replacements require an 8-12 inch incision, Dr. Kuesis only has to create a 3-4 inch incision using the Direct Anterior Approach. The operation is minimally invasive, but the surgeon pays maximum attention to making sure the hip's alignment and leg length are perfect. The goal is to return patients to the same active lifestyles they had before. Patients are so comfortable that most begin their physical therapy just hours after their procedures. That says, Dr. Kuesis, "is a key to the stunning swift recoveries he sees."

Patients are typically walking with a cane and are discharged the following day if they wish. Dr. Kuesis says patients receiving the Direct Anterior Approach seem to have more confidence with their new hips. Patients who've had both hips replaced far prefer the anterior approach. Best of all, studies show the new hips should last an average of 20 years.

Steven has no regrets about the extra effort it took to find a surgeon using the Direct Anterior Approach. "Every step of the procedure," he says "was completely beyond my expectations."

"This is the future," says Dr. Kuesis. "In a few years, the majority of the hip replacements will require no more than an overnight stay in the hospital." Dr. Kuesis will launch an outpatient joint replacement center this spring.

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A specialist in hip and knee joint replacement, hip and knee disorders, minimally invasive hip and knee surgery, hip and knee arthroscopy, anterior hip replacement, same day outpatient hip surgery, and sports medicine, Dr. Kuesis has performed more than 500 hip and knee procedures within the past year.

He received his medical degree from Northwestern University and completed his surgical internship and orthopedic residency at Duke University Medical Center. During his tenure at Duke, he was a physician for the Duke University and North Carolina Central University sports teams and the U.S. Airborne and Special Forces divisions at Fort Bragg.

Dr. Kuesis continued his medical training with a fellowship at New England Baptist Hospital in Boston and has published numerous papers on joint replacement, alternate-bearing surfaces for total hip replacements, and sports-related injuries. Dr. Kuesis is a member of the honorary medical society, Alpha Omega Alpha, and he graduated Magna Cum Laude from Illinois Benedictine College and is one of the team physicians for the Men's U.S. Soccer Team.

*Dr. Kuesis performs these procedures at:
Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital
St. Alexius Medical Center
Alexian Brothers Medical Center*