

FEATURE

joint replacement

NEW KNEES HELP A FARMER TAKE THE REINS AGAI



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After a successful knee replacement surgery, Roger Thoms, of Aaronsburg, is back to working on his farm with his horses.

ROGER THOMS SHARES HOW KNEE REPLACEMENT SURGERY HELPED HIM RETURN TO DOING WHAT HE LOVES

Roger Thoms, 59, of Aaronsburg, spent years with knee pain working on his farm and caring for his beloved horses.

"I did my normal routine, but it kept getting harder to get around," said Roger. "On a working horse farm, you use your knees for just about everything."

A patient of SUN Orthopaedics of Evangelical, Roger explored all of the non-surgical treatments possible before making the decision to commit to a joint replacement.

"I had the shots and did the work the doctors asked me to, but it came to the point where those temporary treatments were no longer working to take away the pain, and I couldn't do what I loved."

When all treatments were exhausted, Roger and his wife, Linda, decided he would have total joint replacement surgery on not just one, but both knees at the same time.

"I am the kind of person who needs to be moving, to be doing something, and the thought of having surgery on one knee and then the other felt like it would be too much time away from the work and the horses," said Roger.



At the age of 56, Roger underwent surgery performed by Charles Cole Jr., MD.

He said: "Immediately after surgery, I wondered if doing both knees at the same time was the right decision, but after the first two weeks of recovery, I could see improvement. I was able to walk to the barn and started feeling like myself again."

Roger underwent sessions of physical therapy over an eight-week period post-surgery. In addition, he committed himself to the exercises the orthopaedic specialists in the Hospital prescribed to him to do at home.

"I wanted to get back to my life, so I worked hard to make sure I was doing all I could to get the new joints to heal and work the way they are supposed to. It was a decent winter weather-wise, so I was able

to get outside and walk for a change of scenery," he said.

Linda served as his coach and partner through it all. "I took on the extra work at the barn and made sure he was keeping up with his care plan. The hardest part for him truly was slowing down because he is just a very active person, and giving up some of that activity was mentally challenging," she said.

"Before surgery," Roger said, "I pushed through the pain to do my daily work. After surgery and recovery, it was so much easier to do things. I have no pain now, and though I've had to adapt the way I do certain things to make the best use of my new knees, I'm back to tending the horses and going to competitions and exhibitions."

Nearly three years later, Linda and Roger are enjoying their farm life—pain free.



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