



MANAGING ARTHRITIS PAIN



Featuring:

Featuring Robb Weir, MD, Orthopaedic Surgery
Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital

Jogging, tennis, racquetball – a lot of active baby boomers have been tough on their knees, hips and other joints all their lives. In a quest to stay active and reduce pain, an ever-growing number are turning to joint replacement surgery.



Joint replacements have a high success rate, but there are alternatives: taking steps to care for the joints you already have. The Arthritis Foundation and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons suggest being kind to your joints by:

- **Maintaining a healthy weight.** Losing extra pounds reduces stress and wear-and-tear on knees, hips, back and feet.
- **Exercising regularly.** Physical activity protects joints by strengthening the muscles that support them.
- **Swapping high-impact sports with low-impact activities.** Instead of tennis, racquetball or running, try swimming, water aerobics, walking or golf.
- **Avoiding repetitive stress.** Alternating strenuous activities with rest puts less stress on sensitive joints.
- **Using over-the-counter or prescription medications** to control pain and inflammation. You can also receive injections of corticosteroids directly in painful knee joints.
- **Taking part in physical or occupational therapy.** This can increase joint flexibility, muscle strength and range of motion.
- **Using mechanical aids.** Braces, crutches, walkers or canes may offer some help.

When to Replace Joints

In the best of circumstances, these lifestyle changes may be enough to improve function and control pain. But if you have any of the following signs, speak with your doctor about joint replacement:

- Your joint pain is disturbing your sleep.
- You've tried different noninvasive treatments, including pain medications, and they're not controlling your joint pain.
- Your joint pain is limiting your ability to keep up a normal routine.
- Your joint pain makes it hard for you to get out of a chair, go up stairs or get up from the floor.

If your doctor believes you're a candidate for joint replacement, you'll be referred to an orthopaedic surgeon. Over the years, surgical techniques have improved and new materials have been developed for implants. As a result, these surgeries have become one of the most dependable procedures performed today.

For more information or to make an appointment with an orthopaedic surgeon at Henry Ford West Bloomfield, call 248-661-6470 or visit www.henryfordwestbloomfield.com/ortho.

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The Champion Of Grandparents' Rights

Local attorney's organization has helped thousands see their grandkids.

Judy Greenwald

Special to the Jewish News

The secret of life is to skip having children and go directly to grandchildren." That's according to cartoonist Mel Lazarus.

These words evoke smiles full of love from grandparents like Richard and Denise Victor of Bloomfield Hills. And for Richard, "Papa" to two young grandsons, author and a nationally known and much-honored family law attorney, a pro-bono case he took back in the late 1970s led to his creation of the Grandparents Rights Organization (GRO), a national nonprofit.

"I began this movement after taking a case for a grandmother who was denied seeing her grandchild after her daughter died," Victor, a Wayne State University and Detroit College of Law graduate, explained. "I found out there were no rights for grandparents — not only in the state of Michigan, but anywhere in the country. The reason no law existed is because no one ever thought you needed a law for grandparents to be able to see their grandchildren!"

This and other cases from around the country generated national attention, a story in *Better Homes and Gardens* and an appearance on NBC's *Today Show* discussing the need for national laws. Victor received nearly 2,000 letters asking for help; so he formed GRO in 1984.

According to GRO's website (www.grandparentsrights.org), the volunteer organization's purpose is to educate and support grandparents and grandchildren and to advocate their desire to continue relationships that are threatened with loss of contact following family acrimony.

GRO has assisted hundreds of thousands of grandparents in the 30 years of its existence, Victor said. "Our slogan is: 'GRO believes that if death takes a grandparent from a grandchild that is a tragedy, but if family bickering denies a child the love of a grandparent, then that is a shame.'"

In addition to building his own law

firm along with GRO, Victor, a keyboard player for the jazz quartet "Bare Assets" (made up of fellow lawyers), has been professionally recognized by such organizations as the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, the State Bar of Michigan and the Oakland County Bar Association.

Some of his more famous cases have been the basis for television movies, for which Victor acted as the legal technical adviser. During the 1980s-90s, he also appeared on local and national shows, discussing his involvement in many high-profile divorce and family law cases, as well as those dealing with grandparent issues.

"When I appeared on *Oprah*," he said, "they brought in grandparents and former in-laws who didn't get along and showed how I was able to not only avoid litigation, but was also able to resolve their dispute and bring them together."

Victor and wife, Denise, married 36 years, express great pride in their children and grandchildren, and the importance of Jewish values in family life. Their son Daniel is the father of two boys, Davis, 7½, and Stirling, 4½; and they attend Temple Beth El. Son Ronald and his wife, Heather, are members of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, as are the Victors. Their daughter Sandra and her husband, Adam Cosola, belong to Temple Israel.

"My wife has always stood by me and believed in me and my work," Victor said. "And my sons were my law partners and helped with the work and many grandparent cases handled through my law practice. Sandra and Adam are my biggest supporters."

There's no denying the best feeling of being a grandparent, Richard continued. "The unconditional love we can give and receive from these little people cannot be measured," he said. "The joy in seeing their smiling faces or getting their hugs and kisses lights up our days, and we love to hear those famous words, 'I don't want to go home ... I want to stay with Bubbie and Papa!'" □



Richard Victor