

# Covenant Connections

Covenant Health News and Community Events

## The Road to Renewal

*Crossing the state line for knee replacement at Parkwest*

It takes about seven hours for Pam O’Gwynn to travel from her home in Mobile, Alabama, to Parkwest Medical Center in Knoxville. She will tell you it’s worth the drive.

“I was so blown away by everything about the hospital,” O’Gwynn says. “Everyone there – everyone – from the security guard as I walked in the door to the nurse who rolled me to the car when I left, everyone made me feel like I was the only patient there.”

O’Gwynn received a total knee replacement at Parkwest in August. At home in Alabama now, she’s back to her active lifestyle with no regrets.



Alabama girl Pam O’Gwynn is back on her feet and walking tall after total knee replacement at Parkwest Medical Center.



Parkwest orthopedic surgeon Herman Botero, DO, checks up on Pam O’Gwynn after her total knee replacement.

### Never Say Never

After getting a new right knee in 2018, O’Gwynn had vowed she would never go through joint replacement again. The surgery had gone well, but the recovery was just too hard, too long and too painful.

Still in need of a new left knee, she limped through life for a long time. O’Gwynn was trying to work full time, she tried to visit her grandchildren at the ballpark, she loved going on international mission trips and she wanted to enjoy exploring the great outdoors with her husband.

“I don’t feel 63, and people tell me all the time I don’t act 63,” O’Gwynn says. “But all of a sudden I was getting to a point where I couldn’t enjoy those things like I should have been able to.”

O’Gwynn began to reconsider when her husband came home with a story about a coworker who had traveled to Parkwest in Knoxville for a better kind of knee replacement. Later he came home with news of another coworker who had gone to Knoxville for the surgery. Then another.

“I mean, this went on for months,” O’Gwynn says. “He kept coming home and telling me about another coworker who had gone to Knoxville.”

After hearing about nine different people who

had made the trip for knee replacement, O’Gwynn knew it was time to make a call to Tennessee.

### Minimally Invasive Surgery

Parkwest orthopedic surgeon Herman Botero, DO, has trained with world-renowned surgeons who pioneered minimally invasive knee replacement. In contrast to traditional knee replacement surgery in which the knee is bent and the soft tissues are tight, Dr. Botero performs the surgery using a technique in which the knee is extended, and the soft tissues are relaxed. This allows for a smaller incision and less soft tissue trauma. Less soft tissue trauma may help speed up recovery.

“In the end you come out feeling like you shouldn’t have put it off as long as you did, because what you’re losing is quality of life,” Dr. Botero says.

He often hears from patients like O’Gwynn who need knee replacement but are anxious and a little afraid. He listens with compassion and sets them at ease.

“Despite it being at times a scary thought or a thought filled with anxiety,” Dr. Botero says, “we have ways to take you through this process that

lead to excellent outcomes and an experience that eases a lot of that anxiety.”

### Treated Well

After a preliminary examination and screening, O’Gwynn’s surgery was scheduled for early August. Dr. Botero replaced her knee on a Thursday. Her husband took her home just a few hours later.

“I think it’s because of the care I got there that I was able to make the trip home that same day,” O’Gwynn says. “Because of that good experience, I left there feeling like the recovery was going to be easier – and it has been.”

Today O’Gwynn is the one telling others about the hospital in Knoxville where knee replacements can be done a different way. The woman who once said she would never have another knee replacement has changed her opinion.

“I would do it again in a heartbeat,” O’Gwynn says. “I mean, hands down, it was the best hospital experience that anybody could ask for.”

For more information about joint replacement at Parkwest Medical Center, visit [treatedwell.com/orthopedics](http://treatedwell.com/orthopedics).

## Knowledge is Power

Thousands of patients trust Parkwest Medical Center for orthopedic surgeries every year. Parkwest’s orthopedic and spine programs have been recognized both nationally and regionally for excellent outcomes and quality.

But the success of the procedure isn’t just a matter of skilled surgery.

At Parkwest the patient becomes a part of the medical care team. The patient is well informed and treated as much more than just another case number.

The learning begins even before the knee or hip replacement is scheduled and continues when the patient goes home from the hospital. Patients meet with a clinical orthopedic educator before surgery to learn how to prepare for the procedure and what to expect afterward, including physical therapy.

Each patient is encouraged to invite a family member or friend to take on the role of coach, who learns alongside the patient, serving as an educated encourager from start to finish.

Having a partner throughout the process takes some of the fear away, and adds accountability when a patient needs a little extra motivation to follow the doctor’s orders about everything from exercise to rest.

It’s all part of what gives hip and knee replacements at Parkwest such a high rate of success. Joint replacement patients who understand what to expect during surgery, after surgery and through the recovery process have better outcomes.

A leader in knee and hip replacements, Parkwest provides surgery that is helping patients reclaim their lives with pain relief and better mobility. Surgeons specialize in minimally invasive orthopedic techniques:

- Joint replacement
- Robotic-assisted joint replacement
- Spine surgery
- Fracture repair

Seven new surgical suites and a total of 28 operating rooms have the hospital well equipped to meet the growing needs of its award-winning orthopedic program.

## Need a physician?

Call us today at 865.374.PARK  
or visit [TreatedWell.com/physicians](http://TreatedWell.com/physicians)

