

# Legacy's robotic-assisted surgery promises faster, fuller recovery

By Leslee Jaquette

**A**n avid skier and hiker, George Francisco, age 69 of Vancouver, admits he beat the heck out of his knees skiing moguls during his younger days. Last fall, the outdoorsman and athlete noticed his "bad" knee, which underwent arthroscopic surgery 20 years earlier, was really putting a crimp in his active lifestyle.

Then he heard about a new surgical procedure first offered in the Northwest in December 2009 at Legacy Salmon Creek and Legacy Meridian Park medical centers by orthopedic surgeon Todd A. Borus, MD. With parts of his knee still in workable condition, Francisco was a good candidate for MAKOpasty, a robotic-assisted partial knee resurfacing procedure, which promises a faster recovery, shorter hospital stay and more natural, feeling and moving knee.

Two months after his MAKOpasty procedure at Legacy Salmon Creek, Francisco hiked five miles and five hours on a roundtrip outing with an elevation gain of 1,600 feet. He is elated with the procedure, the doctor and his therapist at Majerus & Co. Physical Therapy.

"I would definitely recommend this procedure to anyone who finds their lifestyle compromised by knee issues," said Francisco. "I can't run, but I plan to be skiing toward the tail end of the season!"

This is exactly what Borus hopes to accomplish with the procedure. "We see

lots of seniors who have had to give up activities that bring them joy like golf or taking walks with their spouse," said Borus. "With MAKOpasty we can offer seniors a way to improve knee pain and enjoy a quicker recovery and enhanced return to function."

A physician with Rebound Orthopedics and Neurosurgery in Vancouver, Borus was the first surgeon in the Pacific Northwest to offer MAKOpasty. He explains that the procedure works so well on appropriate candidates because it utilizes CAT scan and 3-D modeling technology to map out exactly where to resurface the knee. In the operating room the surgeon inserts the robotic arm in the knee, which has been programmed with all the information, where it controls the procedure with greater accuracy and precision than a surgeon's hand.

As a result of the technology, patients' enjoy several advantages including accelerated recovery and more natural knee functioning which gives them the ability to participate in real activities such as hiking.

Francisco can vouch for the procedure, noting that several hours after surgery he was up on crutches and by the end of the day he was working with a physical therapist and in short order bending his knee 45 degrees and then 90 degrees. Two weeks after surgery Francisco was able to drive and the pain was minimal.

Borus notes that partial knee replace-

ments have been around since the 1970s, but with standard techniques they were more difficult than performing a total knee replacement. "It is very technically sensitive; so if you don't do it perfectly, it can be less than ideal."

In addition to the fact that former partial knee replacements only allowed for one part to be worked on, with MAKOpasty the surgeon can resurface multiple surfaces. As a result, prior to the procedure only about 10 percent of knee surgeries were partial. Today at Legacy about 35 to 40 percent are some sort of MAKOpasty.

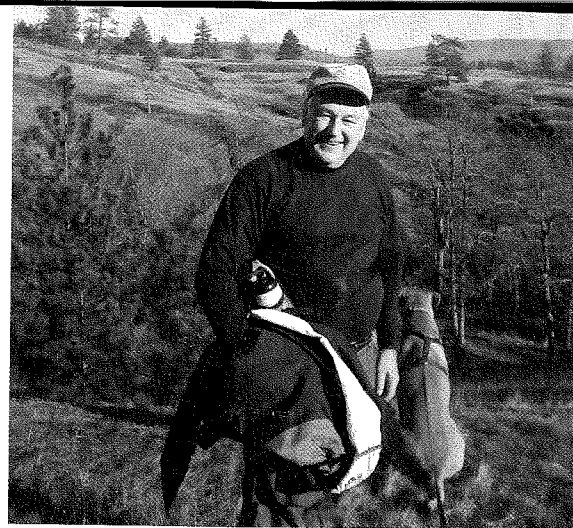
"Another great thing about a partial knee procedure like this is that it preserves so much natural anatomy, such as ligaments and other tissue, that the knee works more naturally and the patient can return to much more vigorous activities," observed Borus. "In comparison, a full replacement may relieve the pain, but patients in general don't feel as active."

Legacy Salmon Creek: 360-487-5341

For background on MAKOpasty:  
[www.legacyhealth.org/body.cfm?id=1191](http://www.legacyhealth.org/body.cfm?id=1191)

MAKOpasty brochure:  
[www.legacyhealth.org/documents/Robotics/MAKObrochure.pdf](http://www.legacyhealth.org/documents/Robotics/MAKObrochure.pdf)

Dr. Borus video about MAKOpasty:  
[www.legacyhealth.org/body.cfm?id=1419](http://www.legacyhealth.org/body.cfm?id=1419)



George Francisco, age 69, underwent MAKOpasty at Legacy Salmon Creek on Nov. 23, 2010 and was out hiking two months later.