

# Is It Time

Joint replacement surgery is *life-changing*.  
Here's how to know when you need it



At first, retirement couldn't slow Bueal "Bill" George down. He and his wife, Phyllis, were as busy as ever—traveling overseas, spending time with their 14 grandkids and overseeing numerous rental properties. But then, the pain started. "It got to where it hurt to walk," George says. His doctor soon confirmed he needed to have both knees replaced.

George wasted no time. He had his left knee done in 2009 and his right in 2011—both times at Baylor Medical Center at Irving. "It was unbelievable how much it improved things," says the 74-year-old resident of Irving. "I went from not being able to do physical work to where I can literally do anything the rest of my body will permit me to do."

That includes helping out two days a week at his youngest son's farm. Since his knee replacement surgeries, he has done everything from clear trees to build a cow shade to remove roof shingles.

After seeing such incredible results, George is a vocal proponent of getting help if you need it. "If you're hurting, see what can be done," he says. "There's no reason to suffer if you can get relief."

Watch Bill's Story

Hear Bill talk more about his experience at [BaylorHealth.com/Exclusive](https://www.baylorhealth.com/exclusive) today.



## Considering Joint Replacement?

For a referral to an orthopedic surgeon on the Baylor Plano medical staff visit **BaylorHealth.com/PlanoOrtho** or call **1.800.4BAYLOR**.

Are you suffering joint pain in silence? If any of the following four warning signs sound familiar, it may be time for a replacement.

### **WARNING #1** **You can't make it through the grocery store without taking a break.**



And it's not just the grocery store. If you can't walk around the neighborhood or play with your grandkids without taking frequent breaks, it's probably time for joint replacement surgery, says Charles Toulson, MD, medical director of the Total Joint Replacement Center at Baylor Plano. "It's a quality of life decision," he says. "Joint replacement is typically life changing."

Don't let the pain—or the thought of surgery—keep you from getting your Zzzs. Joint replacement surgery is one of the most successful procedures being done, Dr. Toulson says. "It's very common. There's nothing I do that helps people more." In fact, more than 1 million hip and knee replacements were completed in 2009, reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



### **WARNING #2** **You can't do the things you love.**

For George, not being able to walk his dogs was a red flag that he needed to do something. So was the fact that he was enjoying his travels less and less because being on the tour bus was just too uncomfortable. Sound familiar? Then it's time to make an appointment with a doctor.



### **WARNING #4** **You've tried everything else, and you're still in pain.**

"Joint replacement is always the last resort," Dr. Toulson says. Your doctor may suggest home exercises, a physical therapy program, medications or injections first. If none of those treatments work, joint replacement may be the next step.

### **More Than Just Joint Pain**

Still on the fence? Consider what your quality of life will be if you don't do it. "If you lose the ability to walk, your overall health tends to decline," Dr. Toulson says.

Plus, if you choose a hospital that uses minimally invasive techniques and advanced pain control methods, you're more likely to have a faster recovery and fewer complications. "We see some patients up and walking the same day of their surgery," Dr. Toulson says. "It turns someone who can barely walk into a person who can live their life again."

### **WARNING #3** **You're unable to get a good night's rest because of your joint.**

Maybe it's the pain keeping you up, or that you can't get into a comfortable position. "If every time you roll over and you feel the bones grind together, you're going to wake up," Dr. Toulson says. "If you can't sleep, you're tired all the time."

## Help for Hurting Joints

As a regional referral center for joint replacement, Baylor Regional Medical Center at Plano offers replacement for every major joint, including the hip, knee, shoulder and ankle.

"We are in the process of becoming a center of excellence for joint replacement," says Robert Berry, MD, medical director of sports medicine at Baylor Plano.

With minimally invasive techniques, joint replacement procedures have less pain and faster recoveries. For example, according to Dr. Berry, 99 percent of people who have a total knee replacement at Baylor Plano go home the next day. And with a new minimally invasive anterior approach to hip replacement, most people are up without a walker the day of surgery.

Baylor Plano also offers a joint education class, so people know what to expect before, during and after surgery, and an accelerated rehab program that begins the day of surgery.