

New Hips Fuel Passion for Horseback Riding

Competitive horse jumper returns to sport after total hip replacements

With her 70th birthday approaching, Patricia Weiner was determined to let nothing interfere with her longtime passion for riding horses — including chronic pain caused by arthritis in both hips.

The pain was keeping Weiner from her exercise regimen of three-mile walks and weight training. The Danbury resident knew it was time to take action when she couldn't sit on a horse without experiencing severe pain. "It would take me 15 minutes just to ease into the saddle," she said. "I couldn't go on like this."

That's when Weiner turned to orthopedic surgeon Sanjay Gupta, MD, co-director of the Joint Replacement Center at Danbury Hospital. Weiner underwent bilateral total hip replacements (six months apart) and returned to horseback riding just six weeks after each surgical procedure.

Things went so well that Weiner competed in her first horse jumping show in 51 years with her new horse — aptly named *Life is Good*.

"There really isn't anything I can't do," she said.

"Danbury Hospital is at the forefront of total joint replacements using modern materials such as metal, ceramic and plastic that tend to last longer," said Dr. Gupta.

Weiner's case illustrates how people who undergo hip replacements can achieve results that go beyond restoring their previous level of function, he said.

"Many people fear they won't be able to do much after a total hip replacement. But in reality, patients go back to leading normal and productive lives," said Dr. Gupta. "In

some cases, patients can resume physical activities, such as competitive horse jumping, that they haven't been able to do for years or decades."

A horseback rider since childhood, Weiner stopped riding when she left South Africa and moved to the United States, where she married and raised a family. With her children grown, Weiner returned to riding a decade ago after a 30-year hiatus.

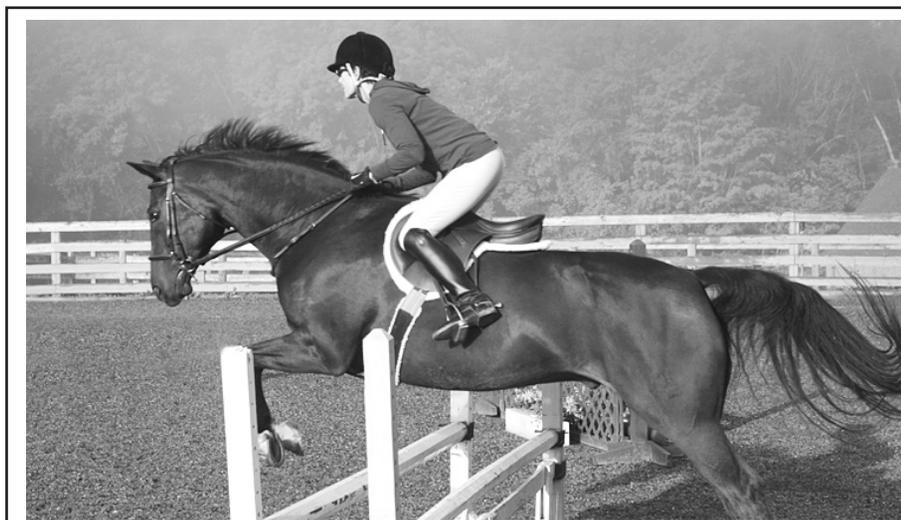
Since the surgery, Weiner has put her hips to the test — even jumping for the first time at a horse show. Her new hips did just fine. "You really use that part of the body when you jump because you are moving with the horse," she said.

Weiner attributed her success, in part, to the dedication demonstrated by Dr. Gupta and the staff at Danbury Hospital and its Outpatient Physical Rehabilitation Center. "The nurses and the physical therapists were terrific," she said. "Dr. Gupta was exceptional. He inspired great confidence and always answered my questions."

These days, Weiner is back to exercising — a weekly Pilates class, weight training three times a week, occasional walks and daily rides with *Life is Good*.

"I feel great."

A growing number of people of all ages are choosing Danbury Hospital for primary and specialized revision joint replacement surgery. The multidisciplinary team includes experts in orthopedic surgery, nursing, anesthesia, pain management, infectious diseases and other disciplines who work together to deliver superior care.



Patricia Weiner

ABOUT DANBURY HOSPITAL

Danbury Hospital is a 371-bed regional medical center and university teaching hospital associated with the University of Vermont College of Medicine, the Yale University School of Medicine, the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and Columbia University Medical Center. The hospital provides centers of excellence in cardiovascular services, cancer, weight loss surgery, orthopedics, digestive disorders, radiology and diagnostic imaging. It also offers specialized programs for sleep disorders and asthma management. Medical staff members are board-certified in their

specialties, and most serve on the faculty of the nation's finest medical centers offering a higher level of experience.

Danbury Hospital Center for Advanced Orthopedic and Spine Care remains one of the few facilities in the State to offer surgical treatment of spinal deformities including adolescent scoliosis. A team of board-certified orthopedic specialists have adopted proven, minimally invasive procedures for orthopedic surgery, resulting in less pain, faster recovery, and a higher level of accuracy. The Center continues to be a leader in clinical outcomes for joint replacement and surgical procedures of the spine.