

Shoulder Surgery Specialist Joins Washington Hospital's Institute for Joint Restoration and Research

John G. Costouros, MD, FACS, Brings Innovation and Excellence to Community



Dr. John Costouros greets shoulder patient.

Washington Hospital's Institute for Joint Restoration and Research (IJRR) proudly welcomes renowned shoulder specialist and orthopaedic surgeon, John G. Costouros, MD, FACS.

According to Dr. Costouros, the shoulder is the most complex joint in the human body, with a dynamic interplay of bony and soft-tissue architecture that allows for the greatest range of motion. Its bones, muscles, and tendons are in constant use, making it susceptible to several unique injuries. While pain and diminished range of motion can be career-ending for an athlete, chronic shoulder pain and difficulty lifting, carrying, or stretching can severely diminish the quality of life for anyone, of any age.

"Treating pain and loss of function is not just about surgery. Many problems in the shoulder can be treated with nonsurgical methods," says Dr. Costouros. "However, if indicated, we have wonderful surgical treatments for shoulder conditions, with predictable outcomes and durable results. Increasingly, we are able to perform many of these procedures less invasively using arthroscopic techniques, and this translates to less postoperative pain, faster recovery, and shorter hospitalizations or outpatient surgery." Arthroscopic surgery typically involves small incisions and a very tiny camera to guide the surgeon.

Dr. Costouros has considerable experience treating the full range of shoulder injuries and conditions including shoulder arthritis, rotator cuff tendon and labral tears, fractures of the shoulder girdle, and complex revision problems. His training and experience are derived from working with and learning from the best innovators in his field around the world.

He treats patients who have a wide range of objectives for their

care—collegiate and professional athletes seeking to keep their competitive edge, those who aspire to return to routine weekend activities and others who simply hope to get through the day without shoulder pain or dysfunction.

Among his areas of expertise is reverse total shoulder replacement, which Dr. Costouros says, "changes the geometry of the shoulder to give a biomechanical advantage to the deltoid muscle for raising and lowering the arm. It works for rotator cuff deficient shoulders that have arthritis, nonreparable rotator cuffs, and for some complex fractures." Dr. Costouros does both traditional joint replacements as well as reverse total shoulder replacements, but he finds that the reverse total joint replacements can treat a broader spectrum of problems.

Dr. Costouros was one of the first surgeons to bring the reverse total shoulder replacement to the U.S. after it was approved by the FDA in 2004. He has participated in several clinical trials on stemless shoulder replacement, a less-invasive design for traditional total shoulder replacement. He has helped to develop many generations of surgical implants, and has been instrumental in the training of hundreds of surgeons over the years.

Before he achieved this level of expertise, Dr. Costouros, who was raised in Los Gatos, California, studied Biological Sciences at Stanford University. He trained in medicine and orthopaedic surgery at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF), Harvard Medical School, and the University of Zürich's Balgrist Hospital. For the last 10 years, he has been a full-time member of the orthopaedic surgery faculty at Stanford University. He is board certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgeons, a Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the American

College of Surgeons, and has a Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) in Sports Medicine. He is a member of numerous advisory boards and participates in surgeon training nationally and internationally.

Dr. Costouros' research findings and innovative surgical techniques have been published widely in peer-reviewed professional and academic journals. He is also engaged in evaluating medical devices and participating in FDA clinical trials, speaking at conferences nationally and internationally, and working alongside several companies that develop new devices for shoulder surgery.

When Dr. Costouros was himself a patient at Washington Hospital, he noticed firsthand what he calls "a good vibe" between patients and clinical staff. "There is very positive energy at every level of care in the operating room and in the nursing unit. At every level, people are happy to be working at Washington Hospital," he says. "I was interested in bringing my busy shoulder practice to Washington Hospital's IJRR, which is totally devoted to joint replacement, and has a proven track record for outstanding outcomes, excellent efficiency, low complication rates, and tremendous patient satisfaction."

When he first met John T. Dearborn, MD, co-medical director of the IJRR, Dr. Costouros says there was immediate rapport between them, and their areas of expertise complemented each other. Dr. Dearborn has one of the most

successful hip and knee joint replacement practices in the country. "Meeting with Dr. Dearborn in his office, I saw several of my shoulder patients in his waiting room, who were there to be seen about their hips or knees. We were already sharing patients."

Dr. Costouros believes he and Dr. Dearborn share the same philosophy about patient care: their goal is to provide patients with the best medical care and the most advanced surgical techniques in a caring and thoughtful environment.


About his experience working at the IJRR over the past few months, Dr. Costouros says, "It has been great. I have already treated some patients for whom I did surgery on one of their shoulders at Stanford, and who came to the IJRR for their second surgery. They have all been universally pleased with their experience and the medical care they received at the IJRR."

When Dr. Costouros is not practicing medicine, he enjoys winemaking and managing his own winery. Dr. Costouros and his wife are both children of Greek immigrants, whose extended families provide them and their 5-year-old twins with lots of support. They are both active in the Greek-American community.

To learn more about Washington Hospital's Institute for Joint Restoration and Research, visit www.whhs.com/IJRR.


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