

Paso Robles Couple Prefers Washington Health for Care

Successful orthopedic procedures for both

Many orthopedic patients say that having surgery at Washington Health is one of the best hospital experiences they've had. Just ask the man who travels 175 miles (each way) to receive care.

Steve Rath, who had his knee replaced by John Dearborn, MD, several years ago, has been back to his active lifestyle with no limitations, including the launch of a new grape farming business with his wife, Janet, daughter, and son-in-law. He's singing the surgeon's praises.

"I've never seen anything like Dr. Dearborn and the staff at Washington Health," says the retired utility manager and city manager. "I was referred to Dr. Dearborn by a friend who did extensive research on the best knee surgeon in the area. And I've sent friends and associates to him since. He's a leader in the field."

Dr. Dearborn is the founder and co-medical director of the Institute for Joint Restoration and Research (IJRR) at Washington Health. He trained at the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine; Massachusetts General Hospital; and Harvard Medical School; and is certified by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery. Healthgrades recognized Washington Health as one of America's 50 Best Hospitals for outpatient joint replacement in 2024 and 2025.

Steve, who lives in Paso Robles, says the three-hour trip to Washington Health was well worth it, and he keeps up

with scheduled follow-up appointments every few years. "Dr. Dearborn was amazing," he shares. "I had a total knee replacement on my other leg five years before, and while I had no issues, it's hard to compare the two experiences. Dr. Dearborn explained everything and gave me a binder of what the procedure entailed, and how he would do it. It was easy, same-day surgery, and worth the drive. I appreciated him and the hospital so much."

Leaders in Knee and Shoulder Surgeries

Steve, who had worn out his knees playing a wide variety of sports throughout his life, now works out three times a week with a trainer. He was so pleased with his surgery, recovery, and patient experience, that he encouraged his wife, Janet, to seek out a Washington Health doctor for her recent rotator cuff surgery.

Janet, a semi-retired certified public accountant, sought out John Costouros, MD, medical director of shoulder surgery at the IJRR for her June surgery. Dr. Costouros is considered a pioneer in reverse total shoulder replacement and stemless total shoulder replacement, as well as novel minimally invasive arthroscopic techniques.

"When Steve had such a good relationship and experience with Dr. Dearborn, I figured anyone in partnership with him would be great," says Janet. "He certainly was. They are both leaders in what they do and on the cutting edge of technology."



Washington Health's Center for Joint Replacement

Staying active is very important to the Raths, now in their 70s and helping to run a family grape growing business. "I don't know much about growing grapes," notes Steve with a smile. "We act more as consultants."

Janet views her successful surgery as an investment in her future. "I wanted to invest in my 90s," she explains. "I thought having the surgery now would be beneficial for old age."

User-Friendly Experiences

They both appreciate how Washington Health made it easy to have the surgery, taking into account that they live three hours away. "They got us home that same day," says Steve. "Steve was in and out of surgery with Dr. Dearborn in about 45 minutes," recalls Janet. "The previous knee replacement was longer. At Washington Health, recovery was better, length of time was better; everything was generally better."

The couple was also impressed by how well the staff kept them updated,

and found the digital patient status board in the waiting room especially helpful. "The board provides patient updates and status reports, letting family members know when they move from pre-op to surgery to post-op," says Steve. "He was in the waiting room and knew my status every step of the way," notes Janet.

Steve recalls a volunteer named Ken who kept the loved ones sitting in the waiting room constantly updated. "He would go back and forth between us and the staff, and was really fabulous. The whole experience was very user-friendly," he adds.

The couple is quick to agree on the exceptional staff. "They were patient, kind, skilled, caring, knowledgeable, friendly, and very professional. Whoever hires the staff should be commended," they both concur.

For more information on Washington Health's orthopedics, go online to WashingtonHealth.com/IJRR

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