



WORDS BY LINDSEY ADKISON

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Steve Melnyk has spent most of his life on the links. The Brunswick native began his golfing career at Glynn Academy, which laid the foundation for an impressive legacy.

At just 18, Melnyk won the Georgia Open as an amateur golfer in 1965. He later went on to the University of Florida, where he played on the golf team and then ventured onto the amateur circuit. During this period, Melnyk claimed both the U.S. and British Amateur titles. That success was followed by a stint as a professional, playing with the PGA Tour beginning in 1971. Melnyk also started work as a sportscaster, offering his take

on a number of tournaments.

But while his career flourished, the strain of the game took a toll on his body. Over the years, he's endured multiple surgeries and procedures. Most recently, Melnyk underwent a total knee replacement with Southeastern Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine surgeon, Dr. Kevin Brooks, at Premier Surgery Center in Brunswick. This time, however, was much different than his previous operations. "I have experienced more than most, I imagine, in terms of orthopedic procedures. Dr. Brooks also did my other knee," he says with a chuckle. "This was my 16th (procedure), but it was easily the best imaginable."

Melnyk cannot say enough about the high quality of care he received both prior to the surgery, as well as during his recovery. From his first meetings with the surgical team to being released mere hours after it was completed, it all flowed seamlessly.

"I went in for pre-op at 5:30 that morning and I was home by 1 p.m. that afternoon," he says. "And it was a complicated procedure, but (Premier) Surgery Center is very impressive. They have the

robotic-assisted capabilities, which is cutting edge and makes everything much easier."

Dr. Brooks performed Melnyk's surgery with the help of OMNIBotics technology. OMNIBotics is a robotic-assisted system used by surgeons to accurately pre-plan and perform total knee replacements. OMNI's computer guidance allowed Dr. Brooks to measure and track Melnyk's knee anatomy and create a customized implant placement plan to best fit Melnyk.

And Melnyk certainly isn't the only one who has received this type of stellar outcome. In a survey of patients from the Premier Surgery Center, 95 percent claim a high rate of satisfaction with both the care and service they received. "A high satisfaction rate and excellent surgical outcome are always our goals," says Premier Surgery Center medical director and orthopedic surgeon Dr. Brooks.

"Premier Surgery Center may sound familiar as it has been around for many years," explains Dr. Brooks. "A little over a year ago, Southeastern Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine's Apex Surgery Center merged with Premier, and we're thrilled to re-introduce Premier Surgery Center in its new location on Glynn Avenue."

The newly expanded Premier Surgery Center is a modern healthcare facility focused on providing same-day, outpatient surgical care. As an alternative to hospital-based care and the only multi-specialty surgery center in Glynn County, Premier offers patients easy access to safe and efficient surgical procedures.

His office uses the most advanced, minimally invasive, and robotic-assisted surgical procedures in orthopedics — including hip and knee replacement and complex spine procedures — as well as podiatry, gynecology, general and plastic surgery, urology, ophthalmology, and interventional pain management procedures.

As a collaborative effort, the physicians were able to pool their resources to offer an incredibly efficient business model. It allows patients to move safely and effortlessly through the process.

The center also provides a lower-cost alternative to surgery in a hospital setting. Their services are offered as outpatient

procedures, which means patients don't incur, oftentimes steep, overnight fees from stays. There's the added bonus of allowing patients to recover in their own homes where they are most comfortable.

"Of course, that's not always possible for patients with comorbidities, but for many of those who are healthy, younger, and active it is a viable option," he says. "Patients like Steve have really good outcomes and we don't have to worry about the nursing or staffing shortages."

The type of surgery being offered is another reason that the outpatient approach works so well. The high-tech robotic-assisted surgery offers less invasive incisions. That, Dr. Brooks adds, requires anesthesia options that allow patients to rebound much quicker than methods used previously.

"It's been such a game changer in terms of orthopedic surgeries. We are also able to use innovative anesthesia that allows the patient to be lucid within two hours and you don't have to worry about the side effects. We can get folks up and out much quicker because of this," Dr. Brooks says. That was certainly Melnyk's experience. He had his knee replacement on October 13 and was hitting chip shots by November 4. He was back to full swing (pun intended) November 9 and played his first full round December 1.

For Dr. Brooks and the rest of the Premier Surgery Center team, results like this make their work incredibly rewarding.

"In orthopedics, we say 'we don't save lives, we save lifestyles.' That's what it's all about," Brooks says.



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