



With two new shoulders, hips and knees, **Leroy** is able to fish and enjoy time with his 19 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

The Six Million Dollar Man

Thanks to Commonwealth Orthopaedics, Leroy is a new man. Literally. The 57-year-old retired elevator mechanic from Falls Church has two new shoulders, two new hips, two new knees and a cleaned-up spine.

It all began back in 2009 when Leroy's back pain became so acute he couldn't stand up. Commonwealth surgeon Tushar Patel, MD, diagnosed a herniated disc in his lumbar spine and performed a microdiscectomy to take pressure off the nerve. "In this procedure, we use a special microscope to view the disc and nerves," Dr. Patel explains. "We then remove the part of the disc that is herniated and pushing into the spinal canal. Any loose fragments of disc are also removed." The surgery relieved Leroy's back pain and he was able to return to work.

Soon, however, he was having pain elsewhere in his body. "My legs hurt, my hips hurt and my shoulders hurt," he recalls. "All my joints had worn out on me." Over the next two years, Leroy returned to Commonwealth on a regular basis for multiple joint replacement procedures: bilateral shoulder replacements with Christopher Annunziata, MD, bilateral hip replacements with David Romness, MD, and bilateral knee replacements with Dr. Annunziata. The shoulder and hip replacements were performed separately; the knee replacements were performed at the same time.

Leroy had osteoarthritis, one of the oldest and most common forms of arthritis. Also known as "wear-and-tear" arthritis, it is a chronic condition characterized by the breakdown of the joint's cartilage. Cartilage cushions the ends of the bones and allows easy movement of joints. When it breaks down it causes the bones to rub against each other, resulting in stiffness, pain and loss of movement. The condition may affect any joint, including the hand, wrist, neck, back, shoulder, knee and hip.

Although joint replacement surgery is considered a last resort treatment option for osteoarthritis, it is rare to replace so many joints in someone with the condition. More commonly, multiple joint replacements occur in patients with an underlying systemic disorder such as rheumatoid arthritis, an autoimmune disease that leads to inflammation of the joints and surrounding tissues.

But Leroy was the exception and joint replacement was the answer for him. Despite having to undergo five separate surgeries, all of the procedures went well with good results. "We gave Leroy better

function, got rid of his pain and improved his life significantly," says Dr. Romness.

Successful recovery from joint replacement surgery depends on a combination of factors. "The results are 50-50, meaning 50 percent from the surgical technique and 50 percent from the patient under the guidance of a physical therapist," Dr. Annunziata explains. Leroy's biggest challenge was recovering from his knee replacements, which Dr. Annunziata performed at the same time. "The therapist really pushed me to get up and walking and wouldn't take no for an answer," Leroy says. "I was also encouraged to do stretching and bending to restore strength and range of motion."

Now fully recuperated, Leroy is back to the activities he enjoys: fishing, cooking, and keeping up with his large family of 10 children, 19 grandchildren and his first great grandchild, born in July. "I'm feeling real good, doing things, not hurting anymore and just taking it day by day," Leroy says. "Life is good and I'm loving every minute of it. I'm very pleased with the results of all my surgeries. I tell everybody – if you have problems just get it done."



Christopher C. Annunziata, MD, earned a BS from Boston College before graduating with his medical degree from Georgetown University. He completed an orthopaedic surgery residency at Georgetown University Medical Center and went on to complete a fellowship in Sports Medicine/Knee and Shoulder Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh Sports Medicine Center.



Tushar Ch. Patel, MD, earned his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and completed his orthopaedic surgery residency at George Washington University Medical Center. He then went on to do a fellowship in Spinal Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Cleveland, Ohio.



David W. Romness, MD, graduated with a BS from the University of Richmond and earned his medical degree from Eastern Virginia Medical School. He then completed his surgical and orthopaedic training at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

For full biographies and a complete directory of the physicians at Commonwealth Orthopaedics who perform these and other procedures visit our website at www.c-o-r.com.