



Sharon Waymire

now enjoys
pain-free walks.

She tried different methods of treatment, including physical therapy and medication. It wasn't until the constant pain drove her blood pressure sky-high, resulting in a mild stroke, that she seriously considered spinal surgery. "It was a real wake-up call that I needed to do something," she says, "or I'd see myself in a wheelchair soon."

So Waymire turned to Dr. Reginald Q. Knight of Orthopedics International for the spinal fusion surgery that has allowed her to stand tall and walk proudly – without pain.

SPINAL FUSION SURGERY

The surgery has been used to treat adult scoliosis for years. Bone grafts and spinal implants are applied to the spine to straighten it, decompressing the nerves and relieving the severe pain. "Typically, bone has been harvested from the pelvic region, which is often the most painful part of the surgery," Dr. Knight explains. "Now we

use a new bone graft substitute called bone morphogenetic protein, which stimulates the body to create bone in the region we want to fuse."

The bone morphogenetic protein results in a quicker, less painful recovery. Waymire began physical therapy right away, and was able to stand – pain free – just two days



Reginald Knight, MD

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For most of her adult life, 62-year-old Sharon Waymire lived in excruciating pain, caused by a combination of rheumatoid arthritis (an inflammation of the joints) and adult scoliosis (a curvature of the spine). "I couldn't sustain myself during the day," she remembers. "I could go to work, but that's about all. I was complaining about the pain, and I'm pretty pain-tolerant."

after surgery. Occupational therapy followed, to help her become self-sufficient at walking, climbing stairs, dressing and using the bathroom. Nine days after surgery, she was on her way home. "I felt much better during the whole process than I expected to," she says. "I can't say enough about Evergreen – everyone was great."

INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT

Dr. Knight says every scoliosis case is individualized. "Patients typically seek out surgical options when their quality of life has been affected," he adds. "Those who undergo spinal fusion surgery are usually off work and normal activities for at least six months." Waymire, however, was extremely motivated and made it back to work just two months after her procedure.

While Sharon Waymire urges patients to evaluate their options before deciding on surgery, for her, there is no looking back on the decision that she says changed her life. "I was not ready to give up and enroll myself in being disabled," she states. "Dr. Knight has given me back 20 years that I wouldn't otherwise have had."

For referral to an Evergreen-affiliated orthopedic surgeon, or a brochure on Evergreen's orthopedic program, please call the Evergreen Healthline at 425.899.3000.