



Libby Clark: Crossing the finish line three years after **Hip Surgery**

An active lifestyle has been a priority for Rockford resident **Libby Clark** for as long as she can remember.

As a kid, she was involved in gymnastics, swimming and ice skating. At age 59, she's an avid walker who recently walked her first half-marathon.

Falls when she was younger and overall wear and tear on her body through the years started causing pain in her hip. Clark said the pain was chronic for at least eight years, to the point where she struggled with leg movement, getting up from chairs and laying down.

She eased symptoms with aspirin and tried chiropractic care, massage and stretching. Clark works as an admitting receptionist, volunteers and is a past auxiliary president at a Rockford hospital, so treatment options and opinions were always within reach.

"I'm also a massage therapist, so I remember saying, 'I know my body, and I think it's my hip,'" Clark recalled. "Sure enough, the X-ray showed I had bone on bone there."

All referral sources pointed to Dr. Victor Antonacci of Othollinois. Clark felt so strongly about seeing Dr. Antonacci, she changed her insurance to accommodate the process.

Dr. Antonacci said general wear and tear are the most common causes for osteoarthritis, which was Clark's diagnosis.



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She, like many patients nowadays, was a good candidate for the direct anterior total hip replacement procedure, a minimally invasive surgery that doesn't require muscles to be cut, resulting in reduced pain and faster recovery. Dr. Antonacci has performed more than 1,600 anterior hip replacements.

Clark had the surgery in June 2014, about a month after her first consultation with Dr. Antonacci.

"I wanted the closest date because I had been suffering in pain for eight years," Clark noted. "I had a fabulous experience."

Clark stayed overnight at OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center after her surgery but returned home the following day and was walking down her basement stairs shortly thereafter. She completed four weeks of physical therapy at OrthoIllinois and was back to walking five to 10 miles later that summer. Dr. Antonacci said Clark's good physical condition made it easier for her to recuperate.

During the past few years, Clark started participating in organized walks such

as 5Ks. This year, she walked the RAMP River Run, which is co-organized and sponsored by OrthoIllinois, and finished in 3:26:56, only a few minutes longer than several of the runners.

"I was exhilarated," Clark said. "It was the longest walk I'd ever done. My husband and I are both very active. We're of the opinion if you're going to live life, live it to the fullest."

She also credited Dr. Antonacci for helping her cross the finish line.

"The best part about Dr. Antonacci is he's precise, he does what he says he's going to do and explains everything to the nth degree," Clark said. "I ask a lot of questions, and I loved his professionalism."

Be sure to save the date for next year's River Run, which always takes place on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend. Looking to train for 2018? Check out the OrthoIllinois Run Right Running Clinic, which aims to improve running performance and decrease the risk of injury. <http://www.orthoillinois.com/service/runright-running-clinic/>

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