

# BETTER DAYS FOR BAD BACKS

Empowered to live without pain



Michael Goldsmith, M.D.

**A** scoliosis diagnosis in her early teens never stopped Dayna Reeves from living an active lifestyle and pursuing a physically demanding career as a surgical assistant. But over time, as the curvature in her spine became more pronounced, the pain became constant and overwhelming.

“Given that my hips were at different heights, my gait was off and my clothes didn’t fit right,” recalls Reeves. “I had this constant pain that went through the center of my hip. It felt like a knife.”

After years of conservative treatments involving both physical and chiropractic therapy, pain medication and alternative treatments, the 50-year-old Silver Spring resident was referred by her physician to the Joseph and Alma Gildenhorn Institute for Bone and Joint Health. Home to a nationally renowned orthopaedics program, the center is recognized for its experienced surgeons and nurses; advanced, evidence-based techniques; rehabilitation services; and focus on patient care and safety.

## Rediscovering Passions

Reeves met with **Michael Goldsmith, M.D.**, chief of orthopaedic surgery at Sibley Memorial Hospital, last September. Dr. Goldsmith recommended spinal fusion surgery, an advanced, minimally invasive procedure to correct the curve in her spine.

“The technology we use now is cutting-edge. Using an intraoperative CT-guided system allowed us to place spinal instrumentation with a high degree of accuracy, reducing the 60-degree curvature to 2 degrees,” he says. “The navigation system is a powerful tool for correcting the spine. It improves our accuracy, treatment efficacy and outcomes.”

To reduce her recovery time and risk of complications, Reeves was enrolled in the hospital’s Enhanced Recovery After Surgery program. In addition to educating patients on how to prepare for their procedure and what to expect during recovery, this program reduces the use of narcotic pain medicine, allowing patients to get back to the activities they love sooner.

“We found it has reduced the need for narcotics and increased our functional outcomes,” says **Cathy Pulford**, practice administrator of the Gildenhorn Institute and neurosurgery.

Reeves went home the day after her procedure and immediately began walking and climbing stairs, only using a walker to stand up or to sit down. After seven days, she

discontinued her narcotic pain medicine, switching to Tylenol and muscle relaxants as needed.

“My recovery was a lot faster than I thought it was going to be,” she recalls. These days, Reeves is completely pain-free, has returned to work, and is enjoying activities with her husband like going on long walks, camping, off-roading, touring museums and swimming. “I couldn’t have asked for a better outcome,” she says. “The scoliosis pain is 100 percent gone.”

## Caring for the Community

Every year, the Gildenhorn Institute provides superior care to more than 3,000 patients like Reeves, with conditions ranging from osteoarthritis and injury to trauma and congenital illness.

“We offer an individualized program for each person, allowing us to offer patients better outcomes,” says Pulford.

Learn more at [Sibley.org/ortho](http://Sibley.org/ortho).

*Sibley Memorial Hospital is grateful to Joseph and Alma Gildenhorn for their generous leadership contribution to establish the Gildenhorn Institute for Bone and Joint Health.*



Dayna Reeves' X-ray image after a successful spinal fusion surgery