

Cleveland Clinic Helps GE Employee Pursue Dream of Playing Golf

Larry McConnell is not the kind of guy to just sit around. Yet this avid golfer, fisherman, hunter and all-around sports lover has been forced to sit on the sidelines while his damaged hip heals from his recent surgery. What is getting him through the monotony of sitting on a recliner all day and doing his postoperative rehabilitation exercises? It is the hope that he can soon get back in the game.

McConnell was not always so hopeful. Before he developed a relationship with Cleveland Clinic, he had two hip surgeries in his home state of Missouri. After the first surgery four years ago, which was an attempt to replace his hip's worn-out ball and socket, he went for a follow-up appointment so that the surgeon could see how his patient was progressing.

"When the doctor looked at my X-ray and said, 'Uh oh,' I knew it couldn't be good," says McConnell, who is an engineering manager for General Electric (GE). "He had made a cut in the wrong place. As a result, I couldn't do physical therapy and was in a lot of pain. I went to other orthopaedic surgeons in Kansas City, but no one wanted to fix someone else's problem."

McConnell, who was 54 at the time, finally ended up having the original surgeon perform a second surgery on the hip. "To his credit, he wanted to make it right," he explains. "He said, 'I can fix it,' but the surgery ended up having the same result as the first."

Several years went by, during which McConnell suffered frequent episodes of pain and the inability to walk well. He could not participate in many of the activities he enjoyed. Then one day, as he was talking with the "Health Coach" service that GE offers,* the coach recommended that he contact eCleveland Clinic.

"I was having a problem with my ears," explains McConnell, "and while I was on the phone with the Health Coach, they asked if I had any other problems. When I mentioned my hip, they told me about an online second medical opinion program that GE offers its employees. GE is a huge organization, which offers all kinds of services to employees, and I had not been aware of this particular service before."

McConnell contacted MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion, a secure program that provides online medical second opinions from Cleveland Clinic specialists for more than 1,000 life-threatening and life-altering diagnoses. The program is a sophisticated, Web-based extension of Cleveland Clinic's 80-plus-year role as one of America's most respected referral institutions. McConnell went online, completed the questionnaires related to his hip problems and submitted his medical records to the MyConsult office.

"MyConsult was very thorough," says McConnell. "They kept asking me for more information. What really impressed me most was the fact that the program's managing director, Dr. Jonathan Schaffer, who is a joint replacement surgeon himself, called me on a Saturday afternoon. He explained that there were concerns for infection and implant loosening that made my situation rather unique. He reviewed the consultation with me in great detail and explained that the hip problem could be corrected."

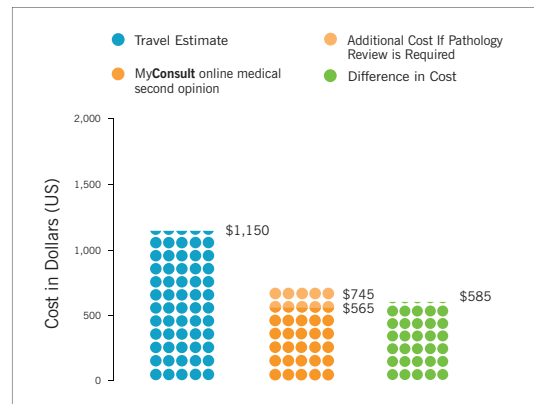
"Dr. Schaffer talked with me for about a half hour, asked a lot of questions and presented me with a number of options on how to

The following average cost statistics of traveling to the Cleveland Clinic from Lee's Summit, Missouri is based on the demographic information of the previous MyConsult patient testimonial.

Lee's Summit, MO to Cleveland Clinic (approx. 794 mi.)
Average price for two people traveling to the Cleveland Clinic:

\$524.....	Roundtrip Flight for 4 days
\$426.....	Hotel Stay 4 day, 3 nights
\$200.....	Food/Drink 4 days
\$1,150.....	Total Trip Estimate
\$565.....	MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion
\$585.....	Difference in Cost

(Prices are based on an average stay in the City of Cleveland and may vary depending on time of year, length of stay, and advance booking of flight.) September, 2009 v1



Cost of a MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion vs. Cost of Travel

proceed," McConnell adds. "The Cleveland Clinic team was concerned that while my bone had not healed, I needed evaluation for loosening of my hip implants and the presence of a long-standing infection. I was amazed that a doctor would do this all on a Saturday afternoon."

Dr. Schaffer referred McConnell to Viktor Krebs, MD, a Cleveland Clinic orthopaedic surgeon who is a nationally recognized expert in revision of painful or failed total joint replacements, as well as other procedures. At that point, McConnell realized that coming to Cleveland Clinic for further testing and surgery was the best option.

"Dr. Krebs is a fine guy who makes sure you're comfortable with the procedure," says McConnell. "With my engineering background, I wanted all the details, and that's what I got. During my first appointment with Dr. Krebs, Dr. Schaffer made a point of visiting me. He sung the praises of Dr. Krebs, and that really made me feel confident."

"The other thing that made a positive impression on me was that I never waited more than 10 minutes for an appointment anywhere at Cleveland Clinic," he adds. "I'm one of these people who are very punctual. At doctors' offices and elsewhere, I've waited up to an hour for an appointment, and this perturbs me. It floored me that such a large business as Cleveland Clinic could see so many people so efficiently and handle their business so well."

In February, McConnell and his wife, Bobbi, a homemaker, returned to Cleveland Clinic for the surgery. "Dr. Schaffer told me that while Cleveland Clinic had extensive experience in my sort of problem, he sensed that I wanted to be closer to home and offered another suggestion," says McConnell. "But I thought about the good treatment I received from Cleveland Clinic and decided I wanted to go there. The experience so far has been good."

Once his hip is healed, McConnell has a full life ahead. He and Bobbi are looking forward to traveling, playing golf and spending quality time with their four children and five grandchildren. "I also like to hunt," he says. "That's another reason why I want good legs."

Thankfully, Cleveland Clinic and GE have given McConnell a leg to stand on.

To learn more about Cleveland Clinic's MyConsult program, visit www.ClevelandClinic.org/myconsult. Registering is easy, and if you choose to seek an online medical second opinion through Cleveland Clinic, the entire process should take 30-45 minutes. You may also contact the MyConsult office at 216.444.3223 or 800.223.2273 ext 43223.