

MY STORY - FROM KELCEY, MICHIGAN U.S.A.

I'm Kelcey, I'm 57 years old. I've been active and athletic my whole life, I've also carried around a bit of extra weight and have a hereditary disposition to joint replacements (my mom has had both knees and one hip done).

At 55, I found myself with a very painful knee and had it replaced. Everything went well.

During this time, I started having pain in my left shoulder (my non-dominant arm; not horrible pain. Usually the pain was tolerable during the day, however, in the evening when I wanted to relax, oh, that's when the pain was bad. X-rays showed bone on bone and I made the decision to have the shoulder replaced.

The first thing I did was some research on the internet. I never watched an actual surgery (yikes!) but watched a couple of YouTube videos to try to prepare myself for what to expect. I found a couple of good tips. I also started practicing using only my right arm for different things. I think that helped me a lot, just doing some practicing.

My surgery was done on a Monday; I was put out for the surgery plus had a block to completely numb my left arm. I am not so sure I would do that part of it again. I have a high tolerance for pain and I think being put out was enough.

The surgery went great; my doctor told me he found bones fragments in the shoulder area that he removed (yikes!). Coming out of the sedation was a bit hard for me this time, but all was well and I went home the next afternoon! Wow-that seemed fast to me but I was very glad to get home.

I purchased a recliner to sleep in and spent most of the first 2 weeks sitting in that chair. Pretty much staring out the front window! I really think I spent most of my first week just getting the anesthetic out of my system. I had books and magazines and my stereo right there...I pretty much did nothing! It was great actually. I spent a lot of time on my iPhone surfing the web; which is where I found the thing that helped me the most.

I honestly don't remember how I found Michelle's blog about her shoulder replacement, just surfing the web I think.

I read about her experiences, how she did it awake (YIKES AGAIN!) and is going to do another one that way. In reading about her experience, what she went through, the pictures.....it was so great to find someone going through the same thing. I sent Shelly an email and to my surprise she answered back. I'd get up in the morning and find a new email (we are 5 hours apart in the world) and send her one in return. We conversed this way every day during the time I was off work recovering, comparing stories, commiserating, her giving me the business when I told her I was out on my lawnmower...much too soon in her opinion and she was probably correct!

I can honestly say this was the best thing in my recovery. Using one arm is a pain, healing from having all those muscles and tendons cut is a pain; it's just something you have to get through. Shelly made getting through all that so much easier. I remember when she asked me if the "grumpy cow" had made an appearance yet and I laughed because, yea, that grumpy cow had made an appearance.

Today I had physical therapy and am doing great. I'm back to work, busy as ever. Life is going by so fast. I am not planning to have my other shoulder done for some time, but the

time will come. I can't even believe Shelly is having another replaced (and Peta, too, in the two shoulder replacement club!).

Having the down time is great, recovering from surgery is what it is. But having Shelly there to get me through it and keep my spirits up and let me know every day that someone else is going through the same thing, that is the best advice I can give someone who is going to have this done.