

From Knee Replacement Diagnosis To Triathlete In Little More Than A Year

Love Of Running Prompts Registered Nurse To Seek Successful
Non-surgical Recovery Regimen With Dr. Annette Zaharoff

San Antonio (2011) – Angela Reid ran the Susan G. Komen Race For The Cure in 2008 as part of her training for the San Antonio Rock N Roll Marathon, but the excruciating pain in her knees and legs simply became too much to bear.

Her general practitioner gave her some steroid injections and eventually sent her to a specialist who recommended knee replacement surgery. Knowing this would mean an end to serious running, Reid asked her friends on the Run Gear Run running team for advice. They suggested she call on Dr. Annette Zaharoff.

Dr. Zaharoff's practice is The Non-Surgical Center of Texas, which specializes in non-surgical treatment of physical injuries and pain from muscle, nerve and joint injuries to chronic and recurrent injuries. She is among a handful of **physiatrists** in the nation, medical doctors who specialize in physical rehabilitation and treatment of the whole patient, not just the problem area...without surgery.

Reid, a registered nurse, still hoped to run in the San Antonio Rock N Roll Marathon. She went to the Non-Surgical Center of Texas with optimism, but was crestfallen when Dr. Zaharoff told her she needed to stop running immediately. "That brought tears to my eyes," Reid recalled. "But then she told me I should try physical therapy with her office to show me how to exercise my legs without straining my knees."

Reid learned that her Iliotibial Band (IT Band) – muscle tissue outside the thigh that extends from the pelvis, over the hip to below the knee – was very tight. In addition, Reid's Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) – part of her quadricep muscle – was very weak. Dr. Zaharoff explained that the combination caused her kneecap to rotate outward, away from its regular resting place, and constantly scrape away cartilage during running.

So Dr. Zaharoff started Reid on a regimen of physical therapy involving heat, ice and electrical stimulation of the muscles to strengthen them. As she got stronger, Dr. Zaharoff suggested Reid take up swimming and cycling, which are less strenuous on the knees than running. At the gym, Reid would get on the elliptical machine to get in cardio, without straining her knees.

Reid bought a bicycle and took lessons with as swim coach. Then, Dr. Zaharoff suggested prolotherapy – injections that promote growth of new ligament tissue in weak areas. As her knees improved, Dr. Zaharoff gave Reid the green light to start some light running.

Reid started some short bursts of jogging followed by longer bouts of walking. As the pain in her knees subsided, she started running longer distances. In June 2010, Reid completed her first triathlon in Austin, combining her newfound love of swimming and cycling with running. She followed that up with a 100-mile bicycle ride in October. With the pain in her knees gone, Reid also trained for the San Antonio Rock N Roll half-marathon, completing it in November.

“If I had not gone to see Dr. Zaharoff and followed her regimen and done the things she advised me to do, there’s no way I’d have been able to do any of that,” Reid said. “I couldn’t even walk up or down the stairs. Now I have no problem walking the stairs – or running a half marathon.”

Reid is continuing to see Dr. Zaharoff for occasional prolotherapy injections. More importantly, she’s keeping up with daily exercises designed to keep her knees strong.

“These days, I only have slight tenderness if I run too far or too hard,” Reid said. “She has helped me so much, not only to run pain free, but to get back my confidence. I love Dr. Zaharoff and what she does.”

Although serious athletes are a natural audience for Dr. Zaharoff – who was once a professional tennis player who toured the globe – she also treats musicians, weekend warriors, Baby Boomers striving to manage chronic joint pain or anyone who needs relief from physical pain or injury.

For more information, call The Non-Surgical Center of Texas at 210.616.0646. Or visit them on the web at www.DrZMD.com.

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