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(Left) Former scoliosis patient and Calumet employee, Patty Metcalf, left, shares her experiences with new patient Kaitlyn C.

(Above) Stacey M., Kaitlyn's mother, looks on while Ron Pawlowski, CPO, measures Kaitlyn for the Charleston Bending Brace, a nighttime only orthosis.

Charleston Bending Brace Keeps Tweenager in the Swim of Things

Twelve-year-old Kaitlyn C. and Patty Metcalf, Calumet's certified mastectomy fitter, have a few things in common. First, they share a birthday, August 1. Second, they both were diagnosed with scoliosis at age 12. Third, they received treatment from Calumet Orthopedic & Prosthetics. But from there, things differ greatly.

Kaitlyn, a patient of Ron Pawlowski, CPO, is benefitting from using the Charleston Bending Brace, an orthosis that is worn only while sleeping, allowing Kaitlyn to participate in normal everyday activities, including being a member of the swim team.

In fact, it was at her sports physical where her 38-degree curvature was detected in January of this year. The curvature wasn't very visible and the diagnosis took the family by surprise, explained Kaitlyn's mother, Stacey M. "Our family physician sent us to the Lakeshore

Bone and Joint Institute and they referred us to Ron Pawlowski," Stacey said. "It's still so new to us."

Ron, who is certified to fit the Charleston Bending Brace, prefers it to other orthoses that need to be worn 22 to 23 hours a day. Since most scoliosis patients are pre-teen or teenage girls, wearing a brace all day is not only limiting, but also sets them apart from their peers. "It's not uncommon for patients to balk at wearing the brace, or not wear it according to the time frame prescribed. Patients using the Charleston Bending Brace worn only at nighttime for about eight to 10 hours are more likely to use it, resulting in a more successful outcome," Ron said.

The Charleston Bending Brace is a rigid brace, which bends the torso and puts bending

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“I can do almost everything except dive,” Patty said.

Patty Metcalf in 1975 is confined to her bed for months with the HALO and Minerva cast. Patty was able to keep up with school work by attending remotely via a phone hook-up.

forces at certain specific locations on the patient’s spine. Since bone grows in response to stresses placed on it, these forces over time alter growth rates of the vertebrae. When wearing the brace, the patient’s body is bent toward where the brace is pushing.

The Charleston Bending Brace also works on the principal that if the spine can be bent to change how it grows at the time of day when most growing occurs, the direction of the spinal curve can be successfully changed as well. Studies indicate that children and adolescents grow in response to the levels of Human Growth Hormone (HGH) in their bodies. Because growth hormones release peaks between the hours of midnight and 2 a.m., using a night bracing system may have the most lasting impact on spinal curvature.

When Kaitlyn was fitted for the brace, she was apprehensive at first, but she learned how to don and doff it quickly. “It was kind of hard to get used to, but it’s OK now,” she said.

Kaitlyn has only been in the brace for a short time and her progress will be measured on a regular basis. Her next set of X-rays will be June 8. “She will have to wear it at least two to three years, because she still has about two to three years of growing,” Stacey said

Kaitlyn said her scoliosis hasn’t affected her ability to be a member of the swim team. Her favorite stroke is the butterfly, and she is able to swim two laps in 40 seconds. Her close friends know about the brace, but don’t consider it a big deal. In fact, Kaitlyn has a friend who also was diagnosed with scoliosis, but with a curvature of 20 degrees, she is still in the “watch” phase



Kaitlyn checks out how to store the brace when not in use.

before a brace is prescribed.

Kaitlyn’s mother is glad her daughter is able to be treated with the Charleston Bending Brace, so she can maintain her level of activity at school and in sports. “I’m glad she doesn’t have to wear the other kind,” she said.

The “other kind” refers to the very confining bracing Patty Metcalf had to wear to correct her scoliosis. Patty’s treatment option at the time was limited to a Milwaukee Brace – a pelvic circle, throat mold, and various bars, straps, and pressure pads that work together to hold a curvature.

“Looking back, the Milwaukee Brace was extremely limiting,” Patty said. “As a child I didn’t do a lot of what kids do. It’s a lot better now. Treatment has come a long way.”

Although Patty wore her Milwaukee Brace for two years, her double major of 67 and 52 degrees meant she had to undergo a Harrington Rod Instrumentation surgery, where 22 vertebrae were fused. The surgery, done in 1975, meant that Patty was in a HALO attached to a full body cast, and had to remain immobilized for three months, followed by another nine months of bed rest. She was able to keep up with schooling through a phone line that allowed her to hear what was being discussed in the classroom and buzz in when she wanted to talk.

Although the recuperation period was long, Patty had excellent results. “I can do almost everything except dive,” she said.

Patty recalled that she was seen for her orthosis by Walter Pawlowski, Ron’s father and the founder of Calumet Orthopedics. “It was sometimes hard to talk to doctors because they were so busy, but Walter and Ron always took the time to explain things to me. They made it easier to get through it,” she said.

The treatment she received from Calumet inspired Patty to pursue a career fitting post-mastectomy patients at Calumet’s A Fitting Image, which offers a full line of mastectomy prostheses.

“Once I saw what Walter and Ron and the others were doing, I wanted to be like them. For something so dreaded and hated (the brace), it’s what led me here and I am so lucky to be here now. What I see is how much they do for kids. I’ve never seen people who care so much. This company is good about understanding.”

Casting for Recovery Brings Survivors Together for Recreation, Support

Breast cancer survivors have a variety of opportunities for support during the recovery process. Nearly 15 years ago, a non-profit support and educational program was established that offers an especially unique approach to reaching out to those women profoundly affected by breast cancer. That organization is Casting for Recovery.

Founded in 1996, Casting for Recovery offers no-cost, two-and-a-half day retreats to women at any stage of the cancer treatment and recovery process. The program combines fly-fishing, counseling, and medical information to focus on wellness, to teach a sport-for-life, and to promote healing. The goal is to gather in a beautiful, natural setting, meet new friends, and have fun.

The Indiana chapter of Casting for Recovery organizes two retreats annually for survivors. Held at Wooded Glen Retreat & Conference Center in Henryville, Indiana, this year's events are scheduled for May 21-23 and September 17-19. While the May date has already been filled, applications are being accepted through July 9 for the September retreat. Women apply to participate through the national organization's Web site.



Casting for Recovery Retreat in Lakeview, Arkansas.
photos ©Kim Singer

“We see a bonding occur among the 14 women who participate in each retreat,” said Barb Simpson, Indiana’s program coordinator and retreat staff member. “We have women participate who are in active treatment and who are 30-year survivors. Many long-term relationships form that are supportive, unique and healing.”

Barb added, “The program adds long-term value to their total recovery. It gives participants a chance to be themselves, share with women who have a common bond, and focus on healing.”



Casting for Recovery retreats are organized and funded by local volunteers and organizations, which support its community-based retreats. Weekend events are staffed by trained facilitators including: a psychotherapist, health

care professionals, such as physical therapists or nurses, and four fly-fishing instructors. Fly-fishing techniques provide a gentle exercise for joint and soft tissue mobility.

For more information on the program, contact Casting for Recovery toll-free at (888) 553-3500, e-mail: info@castingforrecovery.org, or visit www.castingforrecovery.org.

Otto Bock's 1M10 Adjust offers Mobility with Stability For Moderately Active Wearers

Otto Bock has introduced the new 1M10 Adjust foot. Designed specifically for K2 users, who are typically indoor walkers and restricted outdoor walkers, the new foot can be adapted to an amputee's individual gait pattern without the need to realign the prosthesis. This keeps time-consuming fittings to a minimum. The heel stiffness is adjusted according to the patient's requirements for a soft, medium or firm heel strike.

The 1M10 Adjust features a multi-axial joint design that enables the wearer to comfortably venture onto uneven surfaces. Its functional heel band accurately mimics tendon design and allows loading of the forefoot while controlling eversion and inversion. A ball and heel pad is integrated into the foot design and provides smooth rollover during gait. Overall, the foot is uniquely configured to the patient's weight.

This new prosthesis is for amputees with a

maximum body weight of 275 lbs (125 kg), and is available in sizes from 22 to 30 cm. The footshell is available in two versions (normal shape: 3/8" heel height and small shape: 3/4" heel height) and includes a removable connection cap.

For more information on this innovative foot design, please contact your Calumet prosthetist or visit www.ottobockus.com



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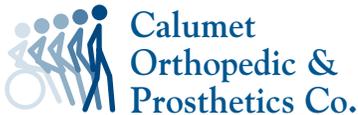
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Helpful Information for Drivers with Disabilities

One of the greatest means of independence is the ability to move from place to place. And the epitome of independence is to get in a vehicle and drive for work, personal business, and just plain fun. Listed below are a few resources on disabled driving aids and vehicle modifications.

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/rules/adaptive/brochure/brochure.html

“Adapting Motor Vehicles for People With Disabilities” brochure provides information on evaluating your needs, selecting the right vehicle, choosing a qualified dealer to modify your vehicle, being trained, and maintaining your vehicle. Also included is general information on cost savings, licensing requirements, and organizations to contact for help. Although the brochure focuses on drivers of modified vehicles, each section contains important information for people who drive passengers with disabilities.



www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/rules/adaptive

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the federal government agency with the authority to regulate the manufacture of automotive adaptive equipment and modified vehicles used by people with disabilities. This site links to information regarding rules for adapting motor vehicles for people with disabilities.

www.nmeda.org

National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA) is a non-profit trade association of mobility equipment dealers, driver rehabilitation specialists, and other professionals dedicated to broadening the opportunities for people with disabilities to drive or be transported in vehicles modified with mobility equipment. All members work together to improve transportation options for people with disabilities.