



2021 ORTHOPEDICS & SPORTS MEDICINE ANNUAL REPORT



ORTHOPEDIC CARE TEAM

Growing with purpose

Imagine a baseball team of all pitchers or a football team of all offensive linemen.

How about a basketball team of all point guards or a hockey or soccer team of all goalies?

Even if each one of the players on these teams was an all-star, the games would not be very exciting. The best results come from teams with depth and skill at every position.

Since establishing practice in 2019, the Blessing Orthopedics and Sports Medicine team has been growing with purpose, increasing its depth to improve accessibility to you and your patients by recruiting providers with skills that expand the types of illnesses and injuries we can treat. As you do, we do not want local patients to have to leave the region to get the care they need.

The Blessing Orthopedics and Sports Medicine team includes me, **Dr. Josue Acevedo** and **Barry Werries** – specialists in sports medicine and total joint replacement, and the following new providers:

- **Dr. Matthew Winterton**, the region's only fellowship-trained upper-extremity (hand, wrist and elbow) surgeon who treats adults and children
- Two orthopedic trauma surgeons who operated on 601 patients during 2021. **Dr. David Levinsohn** is triple board-certified. **Dr. Bryan Pimlott** is fellowship-trained, board-certified and experienced in providing pediatric care.
- **Dr. Jose Santiago**, a fellowship-trained and board-certified nonoperative sports medicine physician whose focus is on new advances in sports medicine, particularly regenerative medicine
- Nurse practitioners **Bill Andel**, **Nicole Haubrich**, and **Erin Wood**
- Physician assistant **Ciara Glenn**
- Orthopedic care navigator, **Mayia Redd, RN**



JOSUE ACEVEDO, MD
Orthopedics & Sports Medicine



DARR LEUTZ, MD
Orthopedics & Sports Medicine



BARRY WERRIES, MD
Orthopedics & Sports Medicine



MATTHEW WINTERTON, MD
Orthopedics & Sports Medicine

In addition, Blessing's care has adopted a musculoskeletal focus, with the orthopedics and sports medicine team collaborating as needed with:

- Fellowship-trained and board-certified foot and ankle surgeon, **Dr. Mark Wavrunek**
- Board-certified neurosurgeon **Dr. John Olson** delivers spine care including his work alongside **Alexis Schantz, APRN-FNP** in the Blessing Spine Center
- Fellowship-trained and board-certified rheumatologist **Dr. Irma Vazquez**
- Physical medicine & rehabilitation specialist **Dr. Namratha Ramavaram**

We are all located in the same building, the Blessing Health Center 4800 Maine in Quincy, for ease of collaboration.

The bottom line: Blessing can handle nearly any musculoskeletal need of nearly any patient, from 2 months old to 102 years old, because we have the specialty-trained providers required for that exceptional level of care.

What else is new? We now perform outpatient total knee replacement. The majority of our total knee replacement patients go home the same day with great outcomes. We are using the latest technology and have added outreach clinics in the region to see more patients closer to their homes. You will read about it all on the following pages of this report.

In the meantime, if you have referred a patient to us, thank you. If you have not, I ask you to consider keeping us top of mind for the next time a patient with a musculoskeletal need comes to you for care. It would be an honor to work with your patient and with you.

By Darr Leutz, MD, medical director, Blessing Orthopedics & Sports Medicine



DAVID LEVINSOHN, MD
Orthopedic Trauma Surgery



BRYAN PIMLOTT, MD
Orthopedic Trauma Surgery



JOSE SANTIAGO, MD
Sports Medicine



BILL ANDEL, APRN-BC
Orthopedics & Sports Medicine



CIARA GLENN, PA
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NICOLE HAUBRICH, APRN-FNP
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ERIN WOOD, APRN-FNP
Orthopedics & Sports Medicine

HOME IS WHERE *the care is*



Blessing's orthopedics and sports medicine team is committed to providing a scope of care that allows patients to find relief without leaving the area.

They also know "travel" doesn't mean to St. Louis, Columbia or Chicago only. For some patients, a trip to Quincy is inconvenient. That's why the providers hold regularly scheduled clinics at Illini Community Hospital in Pittsfield, IL and Hannibal Clinic in Hannibal, MO.

"Drs. Darr Leutz and Barry Werries bring their **extensive skills and stellar reputation** to the Illini campus weekly," said Kathy Hull, Blessing Health's Chief of Small Rural Hospitals. "As a result, Illini has seen an increase in patients outside of the 'traditional' market boundaries with approximately 50% of the orthopedic procedures involving patients in zip codes we would not normally consider in our market."

Build it and they will come.

Joining Drs. Leutz and Werries at Illini on a weekly basis is Nicole Haubrich, APRN-FNP.

Across the mighty Mississippi, Dr. Josue Acevedo and Bill Anedel, APRN-BC, are on campus two days a week at Hannibal Clinic.

"No matter what type of product, if the quality is good, people will spread the word," said Michael J. Bukstein, M.D., FACS, Physician Executive Director, Hannibal Clinic. "I regularly hear from patients and other members of the community about the **exceptional orthopedic care available** to them at Hannibal Clinic."

To the north in the Blessing service area, orthopedic trauma surgeon Dr. David Levinsohn sees patients at the Blessing Health Keokuk Clinic in southeast Iowa, and Dr. Acevedo will add another stop to his outreach care this year as he begins a clinic at the Blessing-owned facility at 437 East Grant Street in Macomb, IL, where podiatrist Dr. Idol Mitchell practices.

BLESSING'S NEW SURGERY CENTER

When Blessing Hospital opened its **new surgery center** in the fall of 2021, it came with the promise of new types of procedures.

It did not take the orthopedics and sports medicine team long to deliver on that promise.

With an operating room designed specifically to accommodate the equipment and technology needed for orthopedic procedures, the team was able to begin performing outpatient total knee replacements for patients with few known risk factors and strong social support.

Richard Rees had total knee replacement at Blessing Hospital in the morning and was making dinner that evening.

“There was no pain. In fact, I went home and fixed tacos for the grandkids’ supper,” the Jacksonville, IL, resident boasted.

“When the doctor told me that it was going to be an outpatient, and I can go home the same day, I thought that doesn’t happen,” Richard recalled. “But, it’s what happened, and it worked tremendously.”

“Most people want to be at home and not in a hospital bed. You don’t get much sleep in a hospital bed.” Dr. Darr Leutz observed. “Most of our patients are active and want to be out and about and doing things.”





Just over a month after surgery, Richard was back in the gym, on the elliptical and doing a mile- and-a-half every day.

“Five years ago, I wouldn’t have fathomed you could do an outpatient on a total knee replacement. I mean it’s just incredible,” Richard proclaimed. “I am back to leading an active life, and I am so thankful.”

A majority of Blessing’s total knee replacements are performed now as outpatient procedures.

“We are treating more patients more efficiently than was possible before because of the space available to us,” Dr. Leutz concluded.

In addition to knee surgery, Dr. Josue Acevedo is a sports medicine surgeon, and he loves what he is able to accomplish in the new surgery center.

“It’s equipped to facilitate arthroscopy – 4K, high-definition, top-of-the-line cameras to see inside the joint and high-definition monitors to match,” he said. “It improves the way I can do this type of surgery by providing the best image available.”

“The setting is more comfortable for the patient, too,” Dr. Acevedo said.

More than a pretty building

HAND IT TO DR. WINTERTON!

Conditions, Treatments & Procedures performed by Dr. Winterton:

- Total shoulder, elbow, wrist and finger joint replacements
- Finger, hand, wrist, forearm, elbow reconstructions for deformity or arthritis
- Shoulder, clavicle, humerus, elbow, forearm, wrist, hand, finger fractures/trauma/lacerations/wounds/wound coverage
- Flap reconstruction surgery (upper and lower extremity), skin grafts
- Trigger fingers, wrist tendinitis, elbow tendinitis (tennis elbow, golfer's elbow)
- Biceps repairs, both proximal and distal
- Complex elbow fracture dislocations
- Tommy John surgery
- Peripheral nerve surgeries: decompression, transposition, repairs, reconstructions
 - Carpal tunnel, cubital tunnel, radial tunnel, etc.
- Tendon repairs, tendon transfers
- Nerve transfers
- Cysts
- Injured worker/work comp – upper extremity
- PRP injections, cortisone/steroid injections
- Dupuytren's disease
- Raynaud's disease
- Finger/hand tumors
- Vascular malformations of the upper extremity
- Adult and pediatrics

When thinking about orthopedic surgery, most people don't think above the knees and hips. Matthew Winterton does.

"Any fractures – elbow to finger tips – in adults and kids, that's my specialty," said Blessing's hand and upper-extremity specialist.

Dr. Winterton completed a fellowship in hand/upper extremity and microvascular surgery at Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL. He is a member of the American Society for Surgery of the Hand (ASSH).

When he joined the Blessing orthopedics and sports medicine team in August 2021, a new mini c-arm became a part of the practice. It allows Dr. Winterton to perform outpatient closed reductions and small-joint injections and diagnose difficult problems in the wrist.

You'll find him in the OR, too.

"I enjoy performing arthritis reconstructive surgery, including those not done by many surgeons in the area – total elbow and shoulder replacements, wrist replacements and reconstruction," he continued. "Those are some of my favorite surgeries to do."

Dr. Winterton takes pride in providing a scope of care that allows patients to address most orthopedic needs without having to leave the region. This includes his knowledge of and skill in treating peripheral nerve injuries and damage.

"Most people with problems like that either go to Mayo Clinic or Washington University," he said. "But they don't have to travel and take a place on an out-of-town provider's patient waiting list. **I do most if not all of the same peripheral nerve injury and damage procedures they would get out of town.**"

Dr. Winterton's skills also include helping injured workers get back on the job.

"I did a fair amount of work comp care during my training, and I do now see a fair amount of work comp in my practice," he said. "Diagnosing and treating the injured worker is an area that many surgeons shy away from because of added paperwork burden. It's something I definitely like doing."

DELIVERING GREAT OUTCOMES

Breaking down barriers



MAYIA REDD, RN

Orthopedic Care Coordinator

Among the constant elements of Blessing's total joint replacement program are **quality, compassion and Mayia Redd**.

Mayia is a registered nurse and orthopedic care coordinator. She is the “constant point of contact for Blessing total joint replacement patients” during the weeks before their surgery takes place until the day they are released from care.

And her mission, in a word, is **optimization**.

“Optimization is key in preparing total joint replacement patients,” she said.

Optimization requires involvement of the patient's primary care provider, Blessing's ortho team and community resources. This team delivers education, coupled with other interventions when needed, that improve patients' readiness for surgery, reduce postoperative complications and improve overall safety.

In the optimization process, Mayia is on point to help the patient address any barrier – physical or social – that prohibits them from being compliant. This includes addressing pre-existing conditions such as diabetes, obesity, smoking and poor nutritional status as well as social determinants of health such as financial, language and educational barriers that are proven to negatively impact a patient's opportunity for a successful surgical outcome.

“This effort leads to creation of a plan of care that is tailor-made for the patient, an individualized plan that breaks down the barriers that are going to prevent them from having a great outcome,” she said.

During the pandemic, in addition to enhancing a patient's education regarding COVID-19 safety in the surgical setting, Mayia noticed the need to alter her communication plan a bit.

“Because of the constant level of stress that people lived with because of the pandemic, their ability to retain information – even basic information – became compromised,” she observed. “I considered the effects of that on our patients and changed some of my communication practices during the pandemic to help them achieve the best outcome possible.”

Blessing did not have to delay total joint replacement surgeries during the pandemic, thanks in part to Mayia's laser-like focus on patient optimization.

THINK LIKE AN ATHLETE



Jaydon Burroughs
Hannibal High School

After a full day at work, most people like to go home and relax.

Sometimes the members of the Blessing orthopedics & sports medicine team do that. Other times they keep working on the sidelines of the football field or basketball court.

A member of the Blessing team attends Western Illinois University football and Quincy Notre Dame High School boys' and girls' basketball games to provide medical coverage.

"Dr. Acevedo and I are fellowship trained in sports medicine, and I hold a certificate of added qualification in sports medicine," said Dr. Darr Leutz. "In addition, both of us and Dr. Barry Werries were competitive athletes in high school and college."

"We understand athletes," he continued. "We understand their needs and their goals for regaining their level of activity after an injury. College and high school athletes prefer to come to us because we get it."

Dr. Acevedo goes on the road with the WIU football team, providing medical coverage for all away games.

"When you like sports, it's fun to be around the student athletes, see the games and to bring them back to their game if they sustain an injury," he said. "It's gratifying to me as a surgeon and a sports fan."

IN MEDICINE, AS IN SPORTS, TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Jaydon Burroughs is a three-sport athlete at Hannibal (MO) High School, with no time for injuries. At least that's what he thought.

During the baseball season of his senior year, his knee began to hurt. Refusing to take the chance his season would be cut short, Jaydon refused to see a doctor until after the season.

"I thought it was something not-so-serious," the 18-year-old said. "But it turned out to be a little more serious than I thought."

Two months after he began feeling pain, Jaydon was in Dr. Josue Acevedo's office to get the diagnosis of a torn meniscus. It was torn in a way that surgery was the best option for long-term success.

"He was upfront with me," Jaydon said. "He told me what was wrong, what we needed to do and why and what the recovery time would be."

Dr. Acevedo is as focused on his patient's recovery as he is on their procedure, particularly athletes who often push too hard too quickly to get back in the game, at great risk to themselves.

"Depending on the type of injury, there are steps an athlete must follow before they can return to play," Dr. Acevedo explained. "When they have healed and regained motion and strength – depending on the sport and injury – they then can begin their Return-to-Play protocol."

"The protocol is a series of steps, gradually taken, that simulate the activities required during competition," he continued. "The workload increases as the patient athlete can tolerate it. The protocol continues to advance until the athlete is able to go through a full practice without restrictions."

"Then, as a team – myself, the team trainer and the patient and their guardians – we decide when the athlete can return to competition," Dr. Acevedo said. "We do things in a timely fashion."

Jaydon was healed, feeling strong and on the field as an offensive lineman for the Hannibal Pirates' first football game of his senior season.

"Dr. Acevedo was awesome," Jaydon's mother Andi Burroughs added. "He thoroughly explained everything, and we really enjoyed his care."

ATHLETE, HEAL THYSELF!

Jose Santiago, M.D., is the nonsurgical sports medicine specialist on the Blessing team. His passion is regenerative medicine, specifically platelet-rich plasma (PRP).

PRP is a highly concentrated solution of a patient's own platelets that is injected into a site of injury where it may induce the release of growth factors and stimulate rapid healing.

How the PRP process works

Dr. Santiago and his team withdraw a small amount of blood from a vein in the patient's arm. This sample is placed in a centrifuge, where it undergoes a high-speed spinning process that separates and concentrates the platelets and other beneficial growth factors from other blood components. The PRP layer is aspirated from the red blood cells and is injected or applied, under sterile conditions, into the area of the injury. The entire PRP production process is done usually in less than 30 minutes.

Patients usually report a gradual improvement in symptoms and return of function. Many patients require two to three treatments to obtain optimal results and may even experience a dramatic return of function and relief within 2 to 3 months.

Why PRP?

This procedure may eliminate the need for further invasive treatments, such as surgery or prolonged use of medications. While other treatments such as corticosteroid injections may provide temporary relief and stop inflammation, PRP injections stimulate healing of the injury over a shorter time frame with fewer side effects.

- Fewer side effects when compared to steroid injections or surgery
- Longer lasting
- Natural and organic from your own body
- Speeds up and promotes healing
- Minimal to no downtime
- Minimally invasive

Side effects or complications with PRP are extremely rare.



HIGH-TECH *Game-Changer*

More and more people are having total knee replacements. According to RheumatologyAdvisor.com, demand for the procedure in 2040 is expected to grow by more than 200%.

Blessing orthopedic surgeons Drs. Barry Werries and Josue Acevedo now use a robotic surgical assistant called the ROSA® knee system, developed by Zimmer Biomet, to help the growing number of people seeking to remain active and pain-free with total knee replacement.

“ROSA is a game-changer,” stated Dr. Werries.

The process begins with X-rays of the patient’s unique knee anatomy used to generate 3D images that show suggested sizes and angles of the minimally invasive incisions that will be needed during surgery.

In the operating room, ROSA’s camera sees tracking pins the surgeon placed in strategic locations around the patient’s affected knee. The camera and pins provide data that confirms the exact location of the knee within the patient’s leg. Dr. Werries said surgeons used to have to do that by feeling with their hands.

“This is how I explain it to my patients; I can look at a picture on a wall and think it looks straight. But, by putting a level on top of the picture, I confirm it is hung properly with objective data,” he said. “ROSA serves as the level for total knee replacement, giving me the data I need for increased accuracy.”

Once ROSA confirms knee location as the patient lies on the operating table, the surgeon can adjust incision sizes and angles so the knee implant is placed precisely and is balanced to work properly as the patient moves.

“The data ROSA provides allows me to adjust for differences in patients and make each knee feel more natural as it moves within the leg,” Dr. Werries continued.



In summary, ROSA technology delivers:

- Real-time range-of-motion assessment
- Data for soft-tissue balancing and femoral rotation
- Interoperative feedback about patient’s anatomy and soft tissue
- Precise bone resections based on pre-operative plan
- Reduction of instrumentation needed due to pre-operative plan
- Use of OrthoIntel orthopedic intelligence platform to connect pre-, intra-, and post-operative data gathered through the MyMobility application and ROSA to help optimize the care of future patients

Implants placed with the help of the ROSA system last longer due to more precise placement with reduced injury to adjacent tissues.

ROSA does not perform surgery. It is a tool to guide the surgeon to a higher level of accuracy in knee implant placement.

Dr. Werries does as much as 90% of knee replacements assisted by ROSA, from the simple to the complex.

For more information, go to blessinghealth.org/rosa.

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

Today, there seems to be a cellphone app for every function of daily life. That now includes preparing for and recovering from total knee and hip replacements. It's called MyMobility, and Blessing orthopedic patients are using it.

Specifically, through the **MyMobility app**, patients receive pre- and-post-surgery education.

"The information we push to the patient through the app is time released," said Mayia Redd, RN, Blessing orthopedic care navigator. "For example, we know that patients are most susceptible to blood clot development in the first 4 to 6 weeks after total joint replacement surgery. So we'll provide their education on the topic when it's going to come into play, in real time."

The app also delivers video-guided exercises specific to a patient's procedure.

"MyMobility allows patients to complete exercises in their home. They click a link to a video that demonstrates the exercise technique to them to ensure they perform the exercise safely and properly to move their recovery forward," Mayia continued.

The app also tracks the patient's recovery plan progress, allowing the care team to make adjustments quickly if needed. For example, the app tracks the steps a patient takes during the day by pairing with an Apple watch or a health-related feature on the patient's cellphone. With this data, the team determines how the patient is progressing personally and performing compared to what is considered average. This gives the team the ability to adjust the patient's rehabilitation plan if needed, and to encourage those who need a little extra support.

Patients like this function, too.

"Patients like to be able to track their progress without having to take notes. It's all tracked in the palm of their hand on the app," Mayia said. "It's another means for the patient to be successful, and that's what it is all about."

"MyMobility helps patients better understand what they are expected to do and gives them confidence to get them more involved in their care," said Dr. Barry Werries.

What Blessing's orthopedics and sports medicine team learns through new technology is improving outcomes of future patients, too. Through the OrthoIntel orthopedic intelligence platform, the pre-, intra-, and post-operative data gathered by MyMobility in conjunction with information gathered by the ROSA® knee system helps the team to make data-driven decisions to optimize the care going forward.





blessinghealth.org/ortho

