



What to Look for When Choosing an Orthopaedic Surgeon

By James Kennedy, MD

You've just found out that the nagging pain you've been suffering from calls for the expertise of an orthopaedic surgeon. If you're like many people, you may not have needed to see a specialist for a medical issue before. And, with so many doctors in our area, it can be hard to know whom to select to best address musculoskeletal problems affecting your bones, joints and muscles.

Request Personal Recommendations

Getting a recommendation from your primary care physician, a family member or a friend is a great place to start. Like many other things in life, we turn to the people we trust for recommendations on auto mechanics, plumbers, financial advisers, lawyers and other service providers. The medical profession is no different. Talking to someone who has been through a similar experience is very beneficial.

When discussing this with others, find out what their personal experience has been with the surgeon. How did the physician interact with them? Did he or she take the time to explain a procedure and answer their questions? Has the person completed their treatment and arrived at a good result?

Consider Experience

Experience is another factor to consider. The broader and deeper a physician's experience, the more accurately he or she can diagnose and treat patients. Along with that, it's helpful to find out if the doctor has performed a high volume of surgeries like the one you need. It seems fairly obvious, but wouldn't you prefer a surgeon who has performed 250 procedures in the past year to one who has only done 25?

Know What Your Insurance Covers

One other important consideration is whether the orthopaedic surgeon is covered by your insurance. Nobody will be happy to come into a doctor's office and then find out it's more expensive due to being out of network. All insurance companies have lists of physicians who are in their network plan. Most offices, including the Crystal Clinic Orthopaedic Center, will also confirm that information. Patients should always check to be sure that they're covered the way they expect to be covered.

Get A Second Opinion

There are a few situations that can lead to getting a second opinion. First, you may like your doctor, but he's advising a specific course of action that you're not sure about. Second, your primary care physician may suggest that you see a specialist for a second opinion and then return to your original doctor for treatment. Lastly, if you've had a bad experience with a physician, you might want to pursue a second opinion from someone else.

While it's wise to do your research when choosing an orthopaedic surgeon, deciding on whom to see boils down to someone you're comfortable with. You're entrusting your healthcare to someone. Ultimately, you must have faith in that physician to treat you.

At the Crystal Clinic Orthopaedic Center, we have physicians trained in all orthopaedic subspecialties. If you have a rare or unusual problem that requires highly technical or advanced treatment, one of our doctors will be able to treat you. Our expertise is unmatched in the Greater Akron area. The Crystal Clinic is the only Akron hospital recognized by The Joint Commission for excellence in knee, hip, and shoulder replacement, and spine fusion.



Dr. Kennedy is a board-certified, fellowship-trained orthopaedic surgeon. He is a graduate of Youngstown State University and Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine. He did fellowship training in trauma at the University of California, Davis Medical Center and the University of Ulm (Germany). Dr. Kennedy specializes in general orthopaedic surgery, trauma and total joint replacement surgery with an interest in arthroscopic surgery, minimally invasive trauma and reconstruction surgery. He has been a physician since 1984.



To learn more, visit crystalclinic.com or call 1-888-502-3041.