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Orthopedic surgeon experienced in sports medicine and joint replacement joins Rome practice

Board certified orthopedic surgeon Elemer A. Raffai, M.D., is accepting new patients at Rome Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, 107 E. Chestnut St. He joins R. Mitchell Rubinovich, M.D., C.M., at the Chestnut Commons practice, which has been open in Rome since 2005.

With the addition of Dr. Raffai, Rome Memorial Hospital will have four orthopedic surgeons on its medical staff to meet the community's need. Richard Mutty, M.D., and Shiv Bhatt, M.D., have private practices in Rome.

A native of Montreal, Canada, Dr. Raffai was in private practice for 12 years in Eunice, La., where he also served as the official team doctor for high school sports teams and the Ice Gators, a semi-pro hockey team. He also trained medical students and orthopedic residents at the Louisiana State University Medical Center for two years.



"I've always been active in sports, including hockey and tennis, so I have a special interest in sports medicine," Dr. Raffai said. "Athletes have a desire to get back on their feet as quickly as possible. So, preparing their rehabilitation plan is as important as prompt diagnosis and treatment."

"As part of the rehabilitation process, we also want to focus on strategies to prevent future injuries," Dr. Raffai said. "Many young athletes tend to spend a lot of time in the weight room bulking up, which can decrease range of motion and flexibility. We teach them the importance of correcting muscle imbalances, stretching and proper hydration to reduce the risk of a season-ending injury."

Knees and shoulders are particularly susceptible to injury of the bone, tendons, ligaments, cartilage and muscle that comprise those joints. "Whether you're a casual runner or a star athlete, we understand your sense of urgency to get back in the game," Dr. Raffai said. Patients will appreciate his willingness to take the time to listen to their concerns, explain their options and answer their questions.

In addition to repairing common sports injuries like torn rotator cuffs and anterior cruciate ligaments (ACLs), Dr. Raffai is experienced in general orthopedic, arthroscopic and total joint replacement procedures.

For those suffering from arthritis or chronic back pain, Dr. Raffai often begins with a conservative approach to see if the patient will get relief from anti-inflammatory medications, cortisone shots, physical therapy, or weight loss before recommending surgery. “Our goal is to help you regain your function and mobility while alleviating pain so you can enjoy the things you love to do,” he said.

“With the advances in the materials used for joint replacement, we are able to offer a surgical approach to younger patients,” Dr. Raffai said. “Today’s implants are more durable. They last longer. In addition, the focus on incorporating physical therapy into a total joint program helps get people moving sooner to maximize range of motion and reduce their hospital stay.”

For total knee replacement, Dr. Raffai is experienced in using computer-assisted navigation that enables him to map out the patient’s anatomy on a computer for a better custom fit, which is important to reduce joint wear. Greater precision helps the new joint work better and last longer.

Dr. Raffai became interested in medicine as a teenager when he volunteered at a pediatric hospital in Montreal. He earned his bachelor’s degree in biochemistry at McGill University and graduated from medical school at the University of Montreal, where he completed his residency in orthopedics. Board certified, he is a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada.

Dr. Raffai and his wife reside in Rome with their four children. After surviving 12 hurricane seasons in Louisiana, they are looking forward to being closer to family in nearby Canada.

To schedule an appointment at Rome Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, please call 338-9200. X-ray and physical therapy services are conveniently located near the practice in Chestnut Commons.

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