


SPORTS PHYSICAL THERAPY

Healed and Hitting the Links

A photograph of a physical therapy session. A female physical therapist is kneeling and examining the right knee of a female patient, Joanna Coe, who is sitting on a blue padded therapy table. The therapist is wearing a black shirt and khaki pants. Joanna is wearing a black tank top and light blue shorts. In the background, there is a computer monitor on a stand, a keyboard, and a mouse. A blue curtain is visible behind the computer setup.

After surgery on her right knee in June, professional golfer Joanna Coe didn't expect to be hitting the links again for at least five to six months.

Shown: Joanna Coe returned to her golf career just three months after tearing her anterior cruciate ligament, thanks to the Sports Physical Therapy Program at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital.

But she was back on the greens just three months later, and in early September placed third in a professional charity golf tournament.

Ms. Coe, who had surgery to repair a torn anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and meniscus, credits her quick recovery to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital's (RWJ) Sports Physical Therapy Program in Princeton. The 25-year-old Mays Landing native began physical therapy after her injury in May to improve her range of motion and build up the strength in her quads and hamstring before having surgery. After the surgery, she returned to the Sports Physical Therapy Program to regain muscle strength and improve her agility.

"My strength has come back so quickly," she says. "My range of motion is 100 percent. I'm

a full month ahead of where I thought I would be in my recovery."

Ms. Coe is a graduate of Oakcrest High School in Mays Landing, where she was inducted into the school's sports wall of fame last year for golf and soccer. She originally injured her knee playing soccer in high school and had surgery to repair a torn ACL eight years ago. Ms. Coe went on to play golf at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida where she was named the Female Athlete of the Year in 2009. In 2012, she joined the Symetra Tour, the official developmental tour of the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA). In May, Coe reinjured her right knee after an awkward landing.

"ACL injuries are not that common among golfers; but female athletes have a higher incidence of ACL injuries than males due to

how they land, muscle imbalances, and because of their decreased trunk stability," says Dino Pinciotti, Ms. Coe's physical therapist who is the director of Sports Physical Therapy. "We worked with Joanna to improve her total leg strength, balance, core and trunk strength. Strong legs and core muscles are key for golfers to generate club head speed and to be successful on the course. They need to be able to rotate and pivot during their swing and must have good balance for uneven surfaces, such as hills and sand."

A key to Ms. Coe's recovery was her physical therapy prior to having surgery, Mr. Pinciotti says.

"She was able to strengthen her hip and thigh and reduce the swelling and stiffness in her leg so she was in a better position for her rehab after surgery," he says.

At the end of September, Ms. Coe returned to her home in Orlando, Florida where she is continuing to follow her therapist's recommended exercises at her local gym. She expects to rejoin the Symetra Tour in February.

"To be back into competitive form so quickly is amazing," Coe says. "I owe it all to Sports Physical Therapy."

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital has four sports physical therapy locations in Bridgewater, Flemington, Hillsborough and Princeton. Services for athletes include acute/chronic sports injuries, pre- and post-surgery rehab, ACL and other injury prevention programs, post-concussion rehab, sports-specific training programs and shoulder and elbow injuries. In addition, sports performance services at RWJ Sports Physical Therapy and Performance Center in Bridgewater help athletes of all ages and abilities gain a competitive edge and prevent injury through services such as speed and agility training, strength and conditioning and one-on-one and group training.

In addition, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital is the official hospital of Rutgers Athletics and the official health care provider for the Somerset Patriots. The hospital also provides physical therapy services for the U.S. Rowing Team.

Visit www.rwjh.edu/sportsmedicine or call 1-855-SPRITS-MED, that's 1-855-777-8763.



Shown: Joanna Coe works with Dino Pinciotti, physical therapist from the Sports Physical Therapy Program at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset, which consists of five outpatient locations for rehabilitation and sports training.