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IS WHERE I SHOULD BE

Fall leads to knee replacement, Jefferson woman is back to independent living thanks to Skilled Care stay.

For many Joyce Choate's age, a fall can mean the end of independent living. So, when the 87-year-old took a misstep in her garage that resulted in a fall last October, the pain in her knee was not her only concern.

Joyce also worried she may never return to her home.

The fall happened in an instant. It was a crisp autumn day and Joyce tripped and fell, impacting her knee. She was immediately transported to the Emergency Room at Greene County Medical Center where X-rays confirmed her kneecap was split in two. She was stabilized at Greene County Medical Center and transported to Des Moines for further treatment.

In Des Moines, Joyce received a total knee replacement. After a week in the hospital, she had to decide where she would receive skilled care to help her rebuild the strength to return home. After considering several facilities, Joyce decided the best care was available closest to home and so Joyce returned to Greene County Medical Center for Skilled Care.

"Jefferson was the right place for me to receive care," Joyce says. "My doctors are there, it is very close to my home, and it was best for me."

In the days following the surgery, Joyce was able to lean on the Skilled Care team at Greene County Medical Center to help her regain her strength – both physically and emotionally.



"The physical therapy was really good, and they were able to accommodate my diet nicely because I have diabetes," Joyce says. "The other thing is that they always had a shoulder for me when I was feeling down. They would come and sit with me until I was feeling better."

She also received a boost from being so close to family during the recovery.

"If it hadn't been for our children who live within a 50-mile radius of me, I'd have had an awful time," Joyce says. "So, I just praise God that I have the children."

Joyce spent about two weeks on the skilled care unit as she regained her strength. She says she feels fortunate that such excellent care was available so close to home.

"I wanted to be close to home and near people who I knew," says Joyce, who acknowledges limitations on visitors forced by the COVID-19 pandemic did make it lonely at times. "I could only have one visitor at a time, but it was much better than being someplace where I wouldn't have known anybody."

"Now back in her home, Joyce is continuing to get stronger. She is attending physical therapy appointments regularly at 21st Century Rehab at Greene County Medical Center and, while she has had to sacrifice some of her yard work, she is back to driving and remaining as active as her body will allow.

"There are some things that I can't do, but for the most part, I get along pretty well," Joyce says. "The team at Greene County Medical Center helped me realize that my home is where I should be."