



## POWERPLAYERS

### *RICHARD A. BERGER, M.D.*

**MIDWEST ORTHOPAEDICS AT RUSH**

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Richard Berger, M.D., a preeminent orthopedic surgeon and assistant professor at Rush University Medical Center, has patients from all over the world flying to Chicago to receive his unparalleled hip and knee replacement surgery. His passion is helping patients return to their daily activities and getting them back doing what they love -- whether it is playing in sports or competing in an iron man. But his greatest joy comes from his two daughters and his wife Marianne, who keeps him grounded and humble.

**Q: What makes you matter in your industry?**

**A:** I spent years inventing a minimally invasive hip and knee replacement surgery that has helped tens of thousands of patients with pain and immobility quickly return to active and productive lives. Unlike procedures of the past requiring days of post-surgery hospitalization and months of recovery, the approach I pioneered allows most patients to go home a few hours after surgery and return to work in just a week. My outpatient surgery is also changing the lives of elite athletes who are back playing pro golf, running a marathon or competing in an iron man. Today, I have performed more than 11,000 outpatient hip and knee replacements for patients from all over the world.

**Q: Who sparked your initial interest in your chosen career path?**

**A:** I used to watch my father build the animated mannequins that were later on display in the windows at Macy's Department Store in New York during the holidays.

He spent months working in the basement on the complicated motions and mechanics of each figure. This sparked my interest in human motion, which has become my passion.

**Q: What is the biggest factor in your success?**

**A:** I went on to study motion during my engineering coursework at MIT. My engineering degree has been invaluable in developing hundreds of instruments used for minimally invasive hip and knee replacement surgery. I've also my engineering background to design implants, which are used by orthopedic surgeons all over the world. Perhaps the greatest reason for my success is unconventional thinking. The joint replacement procedures I use are different than conventional methods because they involve less cutting of ligaments and tendons and different surgical approaches. All of these factors result in reduced pain and swelling, and a faster return to normal function.

**Q: What is the most rewarding part of your career?**

**A:** I am rewarded every day from my patients who say, "Thank you for giving me my life back." Arthritis keeps patients from accomplishing their goals and steals their joy of living. By alleviating their pain and restoring their function, I allow them to return to the active and productive life they once had. That brings me great joy.