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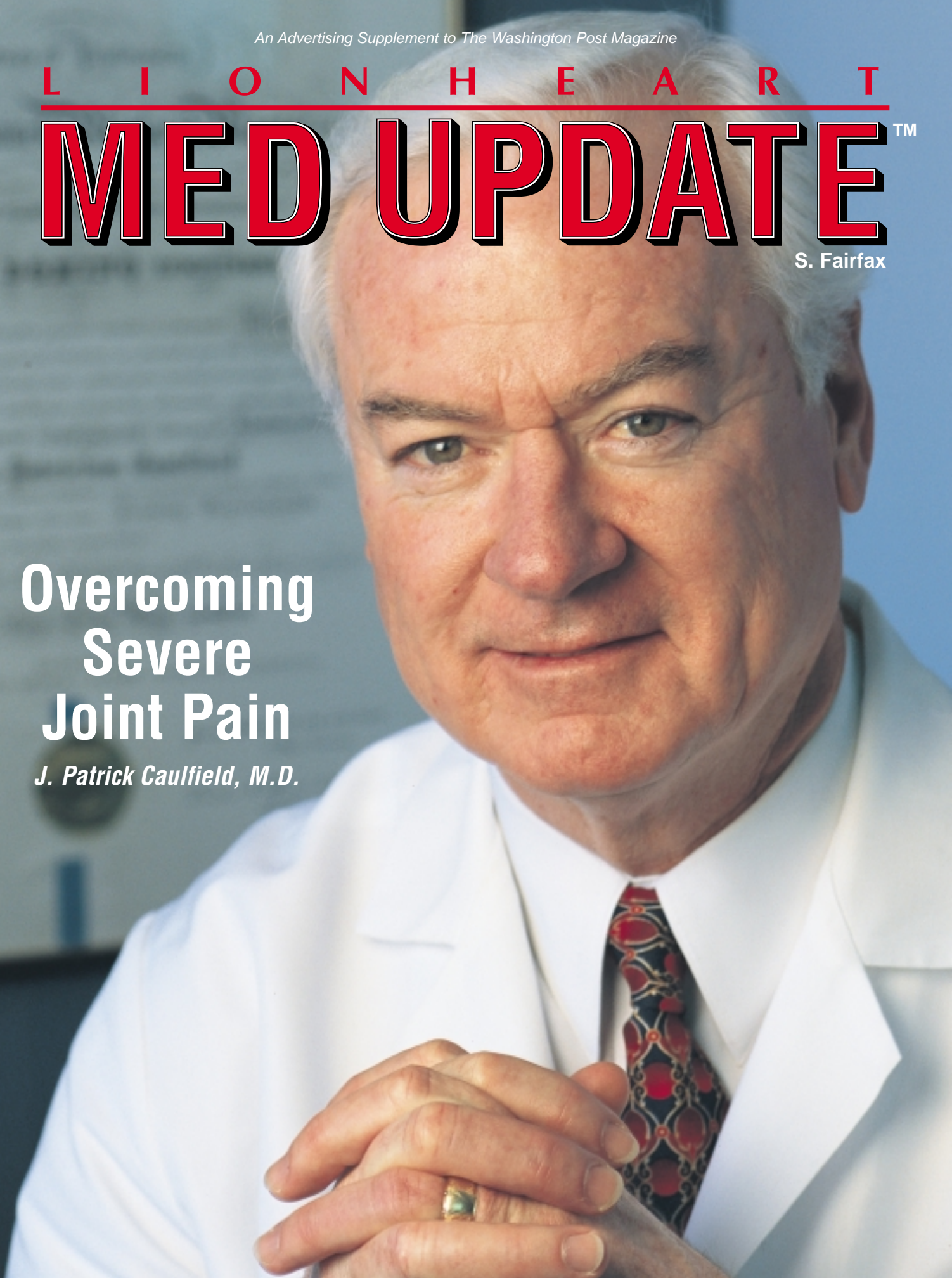
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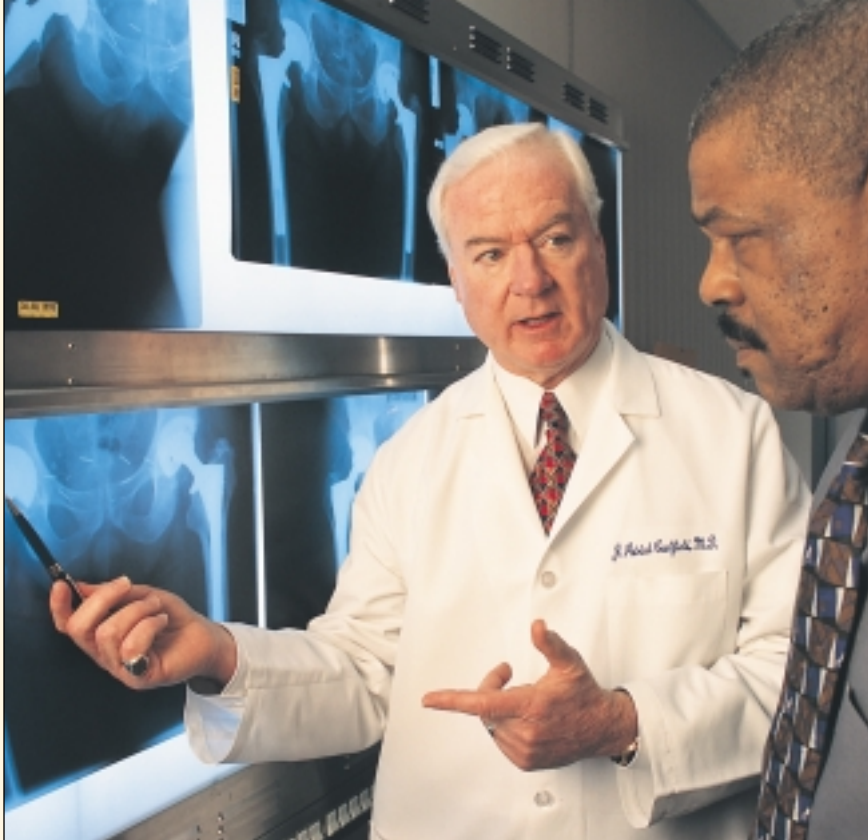
# MED UPDATE™

S. Fairfax

## Overcoming Severe Joint Pain

*J. Patrick Caulfield, M.D.*





Photography by Keith Weller

### **Dr. J. Patrick Caulfield discusses postoperative care with a patient.**

material—are being developed to reduce wear of the artificial joint.

Since 1991, Dr. Caulfield and members of his surgical group have relied on the biomedical engineers at Sulzer Orthopedics for prosthetic innovations. As a global company, Sulzer Orthopedics consistently combines Swiss precision and American ingenuity into “cutting edge” hip and knee prostheses, including a new polyethylene hip prosthesis that has no measurable wear. Dr. Caulfield concurs, “the prosthetic hip designs of Sulzer have improved rotational stability. And with the knee prosthesis, there is greater knee cap stability with an improved range of motion.”

The space program has also contributed to material advances. Experiments onboard the space shuttle have confirmed that substances mixed in a vacuum substantially improve purity. This methodology is now being applied to the mixing of orthopedic bone cement, sometimes used to secure the implant within the bone. According to Dr. Caulfield, “This has increased the strength and wear properties of the bond between prosthesis and bone three fold.”

The material innovations alone have expanded the criteria for patient selection to include individuals in their 50s, sometimes even younger. Reduced time for surgery, hospitalization and rehabilitation has also extended the window of opportunity to older individuals in their 80s and 90s.

According to Dr. Caulfield, “patients, who in the past, were told that they just had to live with the severe pain, are now excellent candidates for these procedures.” To date, the doctor’s oldest patient was 101 at the time of surgery.

### **Improved Patient Outcomes**

Today, this is good news not only for seniors wanting to remain active, but also for the thousands of athletic, aging baby boomers who already have accumulated years of abuse on knee and hip joints. By restoring painless mobility, it keeps working people on the job and retirees independent and enjoying a much higher quality of life.

Suburban Hospital now has the third busiest joint replacement program in Maryland. Due to the growth of his practice and his leadership as the former Chair of Orthopedic Surgery, Dr. Caulfield has played a vital role in the success of this program.

All practice members of Bethesda Chevy Chase Orthopedic Associates have extensive training in total joint replacement. Bethesda Chevy Chase Orthopedic Associates is a multi-orthopedic specialty practice that can address a full range of orthopedic needs.

**If you would like to learn more, or need a physician referral, please call (301) 530-1010. ■**

## **Overcoming Severe Joint Pain**

**F**or those individuals who incorporate several “workouts” into their weekly routine or for the individual who just likes to be active, there is almost always a personal commitment to maintaining an overall higher level of health. However, as we all put more “miles” on our bodies, the sheer pleasure derived from swinging your golf club or even going for a morning walk is unfortunately often spoiled by some degree of discomfort.

When this discomfort extends beyond “over-the-counter” medicine and is transformed into severe hip or knee pain due to osteoarthritis, this pain and disability can be relieved through advances in technology along with skilled surgical hands.

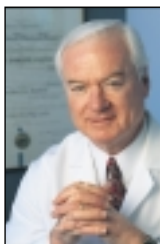
After 27 years in orthopedic surgical practice and having performed over 3,000 joint replacements, Dr. J. Patrick Caulfield has played a significant role in osteoarthritis management and the evolution of hip and knee joint replacements.

In 1969, as a young, chief resident in orthopedic training at Georgetown University, Dr. Caulfield was a select member of the team that performed the first total hip replacement at the Veteran’s Hospital in Washington, D.C. This particular procedure took five surgeons three and one-half hours to complete. Today, according to Dr. Caulfield, “a surgeon and two physician assistants should be able to perform the same surgery in less than seventy-five minutes.”

### **Material Advances**

Material innovations have also enhanced the long-term outlook for many patients. Dr. Caulfield agrees, “first it was a metal ball and socket for the hip, now we have a choice of using titanium, polyethylene and ceramic for the same procedure.”

Recognized as inert by the human body, titanium is the quintessential metal for prosthetic implants due to its “bone-friendly” characteristics. In addition, stronger grades of surgical polyethylene—a plastic



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