



# RehabMatters

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## Bill Scherrer

### Home For The Holidays!

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Bill Scherrer describes Christmas of 2008 as one of his "best ever".

The 6'7 amputee was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident over 30 years ago where he suffered significant trauma to his right leg and faced multiple surgeries including the fusion of his right knee and ankle. For the 20 years following his accident, Bill continued working as a maintenance mechanic despite severe leg pain. Unable to bend his knee, Bill began putting extra stress on his shoulders and left leg causing additional pain issues. In 2001, Bill reluctantly made the decision to retire at the age of 51 due to persistent difficulties with walking and pain management.

For the next several years, Bill accepted his fate and went on with his life trying to overcome his impaired walking. In July 2008, Bill was informed he had a serious bacterial infection in his right leg. Despite multiple failed attempts with antibiotics, the infection progressed and on September 19, 2008, he agreed to have his leg amputated just above the knee. Bill describes his operation as almost a "relief". "Dr. Watson from St. Margaret's Hospital was my surgeon and recommended that I also have nerve blocks done at the time of the amputation," said Bill. "I am very fortunate in that I have not experienced any phantom pain, just some mild sensations."

Following his surgery, Bill was admitted to HealthSouth Harmarville's Amputee Program for a 2 week period of pre-prosthetic training and rehabilitation which involved learning how to care for the amputated limb, beginning to walk, using a walker and crutches and performing self-care



activities including transfers, dressing and bathing. Bill then returned home where he continued exercising and preparing for his prosthetic device to arrive. According to James Kreshon Jr., D.O. and Director of Harmarville's Amputee Program, "Following an amputation, the limb requires shaping in order for the prosthesis to fit properly. We need to ensure the limb is adequately healed and certain no breakdown occurs during prosthetic training. The patient is issued a shrinker that

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