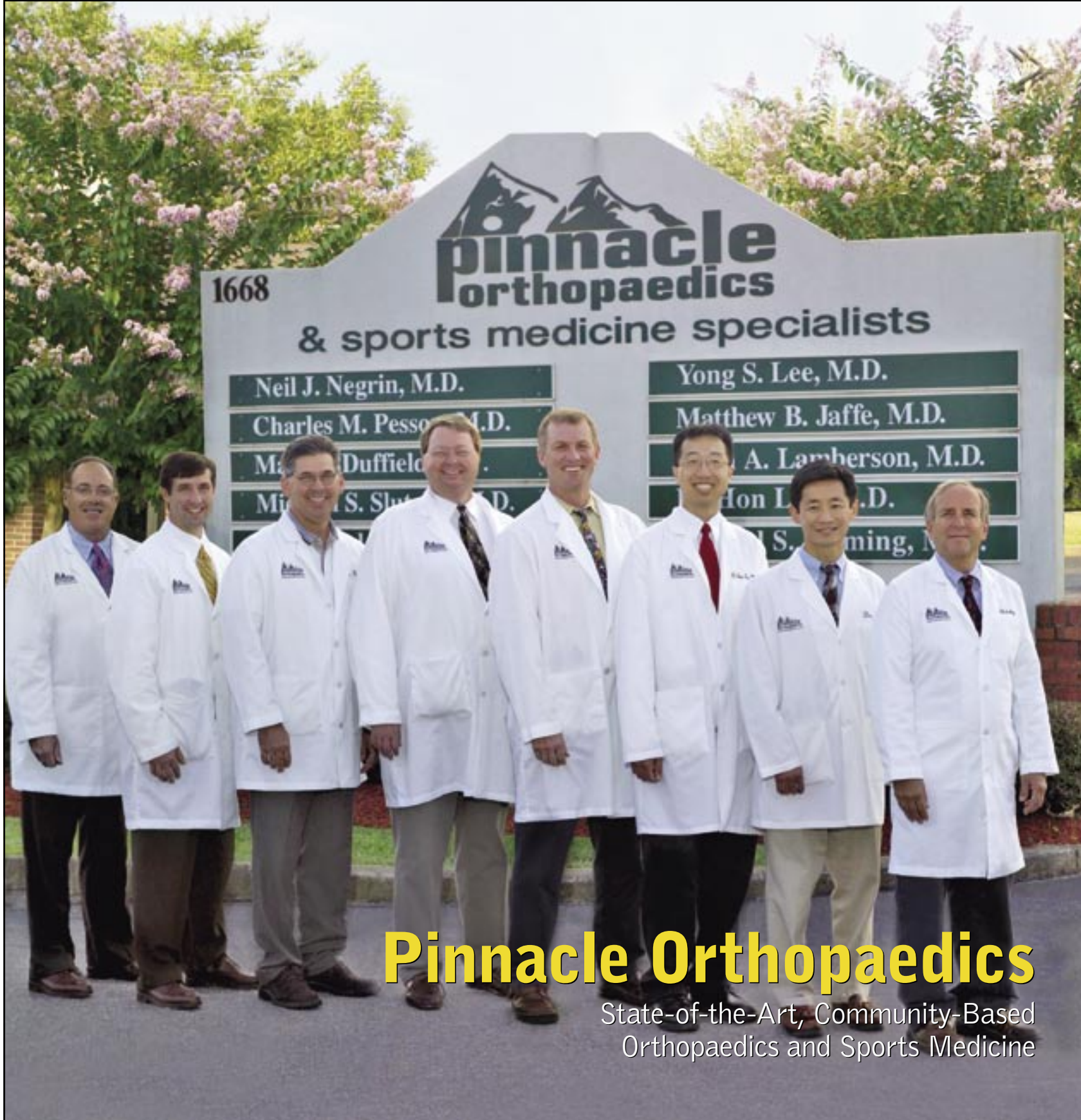


Western Georgia Edition

# M.D. NEWS

A BUSINESS AND LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FOR PHYSICIANS



## Pinnacle Orthopaedics

State-of-the-Art, Community-Based  
Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine

# Pinnacle Orthopaedics

## State-of-the-Art, Community-Based Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine

By Leslie Johnston

Pinnacle Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine, LLC, knows how to build success—one community at a time. Pinnacle, which serves northwest metro Atlanta and now the west Georgia area as well, was founded in 1997 with the merger of two Cobb County orthopedic practices. The practice began with 13 physicians. Seven years later, Pinnacle has 23 physicians and a staff of 139, with 11 office locations, and offers all orthopedic subspecialties. Its geographical coverage extends from Woodstock and Jasper to the Johnson Ferry Road area of east Cobb County to Douglasville, and now west to Carrollton.

The Carrollton office opened in May, just after Pinnacle broke ground on a new facility in Hiram off of Highways 92 and 278, which has an anticipated opening in early 2005. The Douglasville office, which was opened in 2000, began with one physician and has now more than quadrupled in the number of orthopedists serving the Douglas and Paulding areas. In Carrollton, with its current office located at 100 Professional Park, adjacent to Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton, Pinnacle will be offering pain management services. Pain management and general orthopedic services are expected to expand in the Hiram, Carrollton, New Georgia and Villa Rica areas over the next few years.

What drives Pinnacle's phenomenal growth? An array of orthopedic services, including cutting-edge surgical and pain management procedures, a commitment to technology in the form of digital imaging capabilities and electronic medical records, a focus on patient care that is rare in a practice the size of Pinnacle, and finally, a unique method of allocating physician resources for maximum patient care in a community setting.

"There's a lot of teamwork, and that's what has made us really grow," says Mark S. Duffield, D.O., a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon who

has been with the practice for seven years. "The physicians are certainly important, but it's also the people who support them who make a difference for the patient." Pinnacle has built its identity, and a resulting reputation for patient care, by devoting a small group of physicians from the various subspecialties to a limited number of offices. "This structure allows us to build relationships with the community and with the patients," says Charles M. Pesson, M.D., who sees patients in the Paulding and west Cobb areas. "When a doctor refers a patient to us, they know who is going to be taking care of their patient."

Teamwork extends beyond the office to the community. Pinnacle's sports medicine specialists provide medical coverage for high schools in Cobb, Douglas and Paulding counties, and for Southern Polytechnic State University and Kennesaw State University. Pinnacle physicians also provide annual physicals for student athletes in these areas. Community service projects such as the school physicals are made possible through the Pinnacle Orthopaedic Research Institute (PORI), a nonprofit research institute. Recent PORI research has focused on outcome studies for joint replacements, studies involving ACL reconstruction, anticoagulants, pain control and pain medications.

### THE PINNACLE SPINE CENTER

The Pinnacle Spine Center, comprised of three spine surgeons and three physiatrists, provides comprehensive spine care. The spine center is a prime example of how Pinnacle allocates its extensive professional resources across a designated geographical area: patients in the west Cobb County, Douglas, Paulding and Carroll have access to state-of-the-art surgical and non-surgical spine care within just a few miles of their homes. Pinnacle's surgeons, physiatrists and physical therapists, consulting with patients' neurologists and neurosurgeons, treat the full range of disorders that affect the cervical, thoracic spine and lumbar spine, including degenerative disc disease; scoliosis, kyphosis and spondylolisthesis; herniated cervical, thoracic and lumbar discs; spinal stenosis; and osteoarthritis.

Generally speaking, early evidence shows that the limited incision knee replacement reduces surgical time, shortens hospitalization and lowers morbidity. Cost may even be reduced. Not all patients are currently candidates, but as the instruments—and surgeon skill—improve, the results should be even better.

—Mark S. Duffield, D.O.



Featured above: Dr. Matthew B. Jaffe and Dr. Mark S. Duffield.

**S**ynthetic bone grafts are a very new concept. In the past, when we used bone grafts, the bone graft was something that enhanced bone healing, but now bone graft materials are available that can immediately enhance the strength of a repair. Putting in a bone graft that can immediately stabilize a fracture or nonunion is an exciting development.

—Charles M. Pesson, M.D.

All three of Pinnacle's spine surgeons—Craig M. Chebuhar, M.D., Ki-Hon Lin, M.D., and James K. Malcolm, M.D., FACS, offer their patients kyphoplasty, a minimally invasive outpatient surgical procedure for vertebral fractures caused by osteoporosis. Until the development of kyphoplasty, according to Dr. Lin, vertebral fractures were treated with medication and bracing. Dr. Lin, who is a board-eligible and fellowship-trained orthopaedic surgeon specializing in surgery for the neck and spine, is one of a small number of physicians who have experience with artificial lumbar disc replacement, a procedure awaiting FDA approval. Upon approval, Dr. Lin will begin performing disc replacement at Pinnacle as an alternative procedure for patients who currently have to undergo spine fusion.

Physiatry is a key component of the Pinnacle Spine Center. Approximately 3,000 physiatrists are currently practicing in the U.S.; Pinnacle has three physiatrists on staff. "Physiatry fits in well with our orthopaedic practice in that not all patients require surgical intervention," explains Yong S. Lee, M.D., a board certified physiatrist specializing in pain management for neck and low back injuries. Among the treatment modalities that he prescribes are physical therapy, modification of activities, bracing and when appropriate, spinal injection therapy.

Not surprisingly, considering the scope of Pinnacle's orthopaedic specialties, a comprehensive approach to patient care is offered in determining if a patient is a candidate for a non-surgical approach. "The most important determining factor is the presence, or absence, of an unstable fracture or neurological deficiencies that would make the case urgent, and in need of a referral to a surgeon," according to Dr. Lee. "We take a comprehensive approach in looking at patients who do not require urgent surgical intervention in terms of assessing global function—activities of daily living and quality of life." Non-surgical procedures do not necessarily represent permanent solutions to patients' problems. "These procedures may not bring the pain level to zero, or allow complete restoration of function, but maximizing function and minimizing pain are the goals," says Dr. Lee.

Typical physiatry patients are those who have suffered whiplash, injuries from automobile accidents, low back pain from workplace injuries, or patients who experience shooting pain down the arm or leg with numbness and tingling that may be associated with a slipped disc. "Often the injections allow such dramatic relief from pain that physical therapy becomes both possible and meaningful," Dr. Lee says. Physical therapy facilities are available at Pinnacle's Marietta, Austell, Woodstock and Douglasville locations.

For the past year and a half, Dr. Lee has been offering patients lumbar percutaneous disc decompression. "It's a relatively new procedure that bridges the gap between spinal injections and open surgery," he explains. "It is possible to reduce slipped disc and subsequent nerve irritation by treating the amount of herniation through the use of specialized needles with heating



Featured above: Dr. Matthew B. Jaffe.

probes. The recovery time for this procedure is days to weeks, as opposed to months. And often, the relief experienced is dramatic." For patients with cervical spondylolysis and lumbar spondylolysis, Dr. Lee offers radiofrequency ablation, a procedure in which heat disconnects the nerves from arthritic joints to the spine, thereby significantly reducing pain. In addition to the Pinnacle offices in Austell and Douglasville, Dr. Lee is now seeing pain management patients in the new Carrollton office.

## ARTHROSCOPIC SURGERY

Pinnacle's orthopaedic surgeons perform a range of arthroscopic surgery: shoulder, elbow, wrist, knee and ankle. Three of the practice's physicians—Matthew B. Jaffe, M.D., Mark S. Duffield, D.O., and Keith A. Lamberson, M.D.—are fellowship trained in sports medicine and have extensive experience in providing care to athletes at all levels, including professional and Olympic athletes. Today, Pinnacle patients benefit from the experience and expertise of these surgeons who offer arthroscopic procedures for multi-ligament knee injuries, including ACL injuries, PCL injuries, posterolateral corner injuries, as well as arthroscopic shoulder procedures, including arthroscopic labral fixation and arthroscopic and mini-open rotator cuff repairs.

Two Pinnacle physicians—Neil J. Negrin, M.D., and Stanley H. Dysart, M.D.—are already performing limited incision hip replacements. Dr. Duffield and Charles M. Pesson, M.D., a board certified orthopaedic surgeon who has been practicing in the area since 1992 and was one of the first physicians to join Pinnacle in 1997, are preparing to offer the limited incision knee replacement to augment the arthroscopic knee surgeries already being offered. "Generally speaking, early evidence shows that the technique reduces surgical time, shortens hospitalization and lowers morbidity," says Dr. Duffield. "Cost may even be reduced. Not all patients are currently candidates, but as the instruments—and surgeon skill—improve, the results should be even better."

## Pinnacle's Highly Trained Orthopaedic Specialists

Pinnacle Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine's team of orthopaedic surgeons, physiatrists and sports medicine specialists in its Austell division, which serves west metro Atlanta and the west Georgia area, is comprised of board-certified or board-eligible physicians, many of whom are also fellowship-trained.

- **Mark S. Duffield, D.O.** Dr. Duffield is a graduate of Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine. He completed his residency at Michigan State University and a sports medicine fellowship with the University of South Florida. A sports medicine specialist, Dr. Duffield, who is board certified in orthopaedic surgery, has provided care for the University of South Florida, the Tampa Bay Lightning, and the New York Yankees.

- **Samuel S. Fleming, M.D.** Dr. Fleming graduated from the Medical College of Georgia and completed his residency at the Duke University Medical Center. He is board certified in orthopaedic surgery.

- **Matthew B. Jaffe, M.D.** A graduate of the Emory University School of Medicine, Dr. Jaffe completed his residency at the University of Maryland/Shock Trauma Center. He also completed a sports medicine fellowship at the University of Maryland, and has served as an assistant team physician with the University of Maryland Terrapins and with the Baltimore Ravens. He specializes in sports medicine, knee and shoulder arthroscopy, and fracture care, and he has extensive experience in treating patients with multiple ligament injuries.

- **Keith A. Lamberson, M.D.** Dr. Lamberson graduated from the Tulane University School of Medicine and completed his residency at Emory University. He completed his sports medicine fellowship at the Orthopaedic Specialty Hospital in Salt Lake City, and he has been a traveling team physician with the U.S. Ski Team, an assistant team physician for the U.S. Ski and Snowboarding Association, a team physician with the World Indoor Soccer League, and a venue physician for the 1996 Olympic Games. He specializes in arthroscopic surgery, surgery of the knee and shoulder, and sports injuries.

- **Yong S. Lee, M.D.** A graduate of Howard University School of Medicine, Dr. Lee completed his physiatry training at Emory University. He is board certified and specializes in electrodiagnostic medicine, repetitive soft tissue use injuries, and comprehensive non-operative management of neck and back pain.

- **Ki-Hon Lin, M.D.** Dr. Lin is a graduate of the Baylor College of Medicine and completed his orthopaedic residency at Tufts/New England Medical Center and a spine surgery fellowship at New England Baptist Hospital in Boston. Dr. Lin specializes in adult degenerative diseases and deformity in the cervical and lumbar regions of the spine.

- **Neil J. Negrin, M.D.** A graduate of the Creighton University School of Medicine, Dr. Negrin completed his orthopaedic residency at Ohio State University. He has been board certified in orthopaedic surgery since 1983.

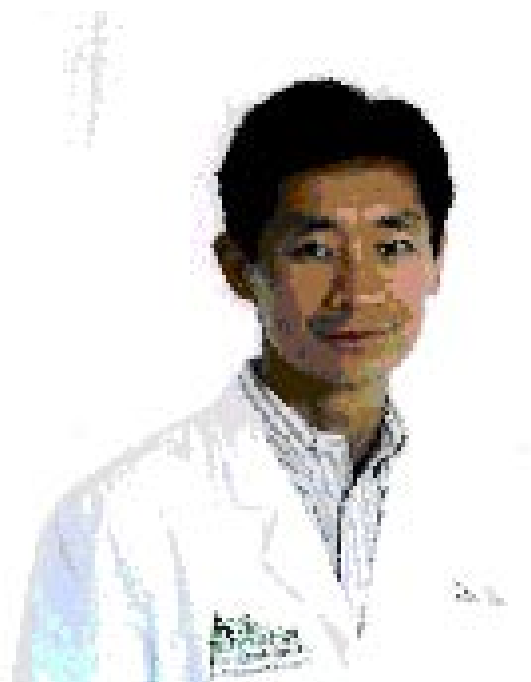
- **Charles M. Pesson, M.D.** Dr. Pesson is a graduate of the Louisiana State University School of Medicine and completed his orthopaedic residency with the Louisiana State University Affiliated Hospitals. He has been board certified in orthopaedic surgery since 1993.

- **Michael S. Slutzky, M.D.** Dr. Slutzky is a graduate of the Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara. He completed his residency at Mount Sinai Medical Center and a hand surgery fellowship at the University of South Florida. He has been board certified in orthopaedic surgery since 1991.

- **Maria Tolotta, M.D.** Dr. Tolotta specializes in physiatry. She is a graduate of the University of Texas Medical School at Houston and completed her residency at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, Northwestern University. Her clinical interests include treatment of musculoskeletal injuries, management of spasticity related to neurologic illness, and electromyography.

Physiatry fits in well with our orthopaedic practice in that not all patients require surgical intervention.

—Yong S. Lee, M.D.



Featured above: Dr. Yong S. Lee.

“Knee injuries will develop arthritis at some point,” Dr. Pesson adds. “When conservative treatment is no longer effective and the joint has deteriorated, we want to be able to give patients the best procedure possible in terms of reconstruction.” Each year, approximately 300,000 Americans undergo knee replacement surgery, a number that will be on the rise as America’s baby boomers grow older. “The procedure is still so new that the instruments have not been released for general use. They are the same type of instruments that we’re already using, but they’re being modified for use with a smaller incision. We’re working with the device manufacturer to develop these products to make them easier to use and to achieve better outcomes, which is our goal in treating the patient.” One of the more dramatic results of limited incision knee surgery is the reduction in hospital stay as compared with traditional knee replacement surgery. While the procedure is still in the clinical trial phase, surgeons have even been releasing patients the next day—in about 23 hours following surgery.

Over the last year, Dr. Pesson has also begun to use synthetic bone materials, synthetic bone grafts that add to the stability and strength of a repair. “This is a very new concept,” he explains. “In the past, when we used bone grafts, the bone graft was something that enhanced bone healing, but now bone graft materials are available that can immediately enhance the strength of a repair. Putting in a bone graft that can immediately stabilize the fracture or nonunion is an exciting development.” In addition to the limited incision knee replacements and synthetic bone grafts, Dr. Pesson is now also performing a very new procedure—an arthroscopic ankle fusion.

Not always heralded in the popular media, advances in orthopaedics, pain management and orthopaedic surgery have been steady, if unobtrusive, in recent years. Making a difference in the quality of life—whether it is lessening chronic pain, giving a patient new life with a joint replacement, or repairing accidental damage—bringing these advances to patients in local communities is the hallmark of Pinnacle Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine. ■