



WITTENSTEIN

intens

Smarter Limb
Lengthening

Fit for life thanks to FITBONE®





Ben Harrow has got back his independence. He can now take a walk again without anyone to help him.

»The FITBONE®-method got me up and walking again.«

BEN HARROW

May 15, 2012 was a turning point in the life of Ben Harrow, a Captain in the United States Army. He was so badly wounded in action in Afghanistan that he lost both legs. A father and a keen sportsman, his next battle in life was against the wheelchair that threatened to be his permanent fate: today, thanks to two prostheses, he can walk again and play with his children. He owes his new, independent and autonomous existence to FITBONE®, the intramedullary lengthening nail.

Ben Harrow spent about two months in hospital as a result of his injuries before he was fit enough to start his rehabilitation. It was during this period that he made up his mind he would “walk again one day”. While fighting his uphill battle against the wheelchair he became an expert in limb lengthening techniques: “I hit on the subject while surfing the net. It was some-

thing I’d never heard of before”, he explains, looking back. “Nevertheless, I knew straight away that a FITBONE® operation would literally put me back on my feet again.”

Pros and cons weighed up in numerous consultations

The chief outcome of his research was that artificial lower limbs can only be individually fitted if the femur has a certain minimum length. That wasn’t the case with Ben Harrow – the amputation had left his right femur too short for a prosthetic leg. He therefore sought advice from various physicians – including a limb lengthening consultant in Baltimore who specializes in treatment using external fixators. “He told me the treatment would last eight to ten months and that I’d have to take antibiotics the whole time to rule out the risk of infection”, Ben Harrow continues. Yet he

Extremity correction with FITBONE®



The FITBONE® intramedullary lengthening nail from WITTENSTEIN intens is a fully implantable limb lengthening system, for example for compensating leg length discrepancies or one-sided abnormal or impaired growth. The operation by specially trained surgeons is a minimally invasive procedure which gives perfect cosmetic results with

no scarring or side-effects. Only twenty-four hours later, the leg has recovered sufficiently to bear at least part of the FITBONE® patient's weight again and the first steps can be attempted with crutches.

They can be discharged from hospital within a few days and subsequently control the distraction process themselves in the comfort of their own home. They are provided with a handy transmitter for this purpose, which activates the FITBONE® motor and carefully lengthens the nail. In contrast to external fixators, FITBONE® unites high wearing and treatment comfort for the patient with significantly reduced pain throughout the distraction phase. Another advantage is that rather than being confined to their bed, the patient can to a large extent lead a normal life again during the treatment period.

refused to resign himself to this less-than-satisfactory solution and carried on searching until he stumbled on Dr. Mark Dahl. "He belongs to the specially trained network of surgeons at the Centers of Excellence, whose members benefit from the regular instruction and qualification measures we provide in connection with FITBONE®, adds Stefanie Michel, Product Manager WITTENSTEIN intens. The physicians participating in this network are all experts in the intramedullary lengthening nail who have helped several thousand patients achieve new mobility over the past few years. "Definitely the most important aspect for me was that the FITBONE® could be fitted to my very short right femur", Ben Harrow points out.

The wheelchair is banished for good

The FITBONE® procedure was a huge success – as was the treatment process. "Dr. Dahl reckoned on lon-

gitudinal growth of about five to seven centimeters to begin with, but eleven months on we measured an amazing fifteen centimeters – just perfect for fitting the prosthesis", Ben Harrow recalls.

Six months later, he's finally made it: Ben Harrow is out and about again on two legs without anyone to help him. Not surprisingly, he has no reservations in recommending the FITBONE® treatment to others. It's a story that's propelled him to stardom on American TV shows and YouTube.

For more information, see
www.wittenstein-intens.com



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ORTHIFX Srl
Via Delle Nazioni 9, 37012 Bussolengo (Verona), Italy
Telephone +39 045 6719000, Fax +39 045 6719380

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