

Meet the Doctor:

A typical workweek for an orthopaedic surgeon, as with other medical specialties, can run between 50 and 60 hours a week with the majority of time spent with patients either in an exam room or in the operating room. With everything from on-call emergencies, knee injuries, broken bones, torn tendons, rotator cuff injuries and a host of degenerative conditions, in some ways being an orthopaedic surgeon is not a profession, it is life.

"Most days start between 5:30 and 6 and end between 7 and 9 in the evenings," said Rich Wathne, MD. "Both our surgery days and clinic days are non-stop. My general philosophy is when a patient is suffering from pain or injury, let's get them in as soon as possible so we can outline a treatment plan and find them some relief. For me, it is critical to be aware of and responsive to the needs of my patients."

Apart from caring for each patient from injury through rehabilitation, orthopaedic surgeons must continually stay up to date on technological advancements and medical procedures as well as patient records and charts. Overall, their days can be defined by pressure, multitasking and specific, often intense, situations. Finding a balance between professional life and family can be challenging.

"The best advice I received when I began practicing was to focus on one patient at a time," Dr. Wathne said. "Enjoy every part of what you do each and every day and find opportunities and occasions to take a break from your routine to recharge so you can return refreshed."

Outside of the rigors of work, Wathne engages in a multitude of sports including skiing, biking, tennis and golf. A love of and involvement in sports sort of runs in the family. His high school daughters play soccer, tennis and golf, of which his is an avid and very devoted fan. While sports continue to play a significant role for Dr. Wathne, he is also a self-professed lover of live concerts. Railroad Earth, whose music combines elements of bluegrass, rock and roll, jazz, Celtic and more, headlined at the Targhee Bluegrass Festival last summer. He has followed their tour schedule

and when time permits, he takes some time off to see them live and in concert.

"Railroad Earth is known for their extensive live improvisation and lyrical songs," Dr. Wathne said. "Live concerts are always an experience, just recently we saw Coldplay in Philadelphia."

Albeit attending a concert is exciting, and socially inviting, the lesser known advantage is the health benefit. Music therapy is widely accepted as a way to enhance well-being, reduce stress and provide a sense of comfort. Of course, for Dr. Wathne, travel, concerts and music provide opportunities to spend quality time with his family. It may even be a source of inspiration to practice the guitar.

As a board certified orthopaedic surgeon who has completed a sports medicine fellowship, Dr. Wathne specializes in state of the art arthroscopic surgery and total joint replacement of the shoulder and knee. He is an active member of the Arthroscopy Association of North America and has been providing expert orthopaedic care for the people of Southeast Idaho for nearly two decades. His medical degree is from UMDNJ New Jersey Medical School. His residency training was at NYU Hospital for Joint Diseases and he complete his sports medicine fellowship at the University of Colorado.

Dr. Wathne is primarily concerned with the investigation, preservation and restoration by medical, surgical and rehabilitative means to all structures of the musculoskeletal system affected by activity. From wellness to nutritional counseling to state of the art surgery and sports rehabilitation, Pocatello Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine can help keep you at your peak performance. For more information about orthopaedic injuries and prevention visit www.wathneortho.com; to schedule a consult or to reach our office, call 208-233-2100.

To find a physician, call Portneuf Medical Center's physician referral line toll-free at 1-877-721-6673.



Dr. Rich Wathne,
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