



WITTENSTEIN intens GmbH: “Limb lengthening with FITBONE® got me up and walking again”

January 10, 2017

Being severely wounded in action in Afghanistan on May 15, 2012 was certainly a turning point in the life of 31-year old Captain Ben Harrow. Although the Special Forces Detachment Commander in the 7th Special Forces Group, today a father of two young children and a keen sportsman, didn't lose his life, he did lose something that made – and still makes – life worth living: his mobility. “The FITBONE® intramedullary limb lengthening nail from WITTENSTEIN intens made my femur grow again in a way that enabled lower limb prostheses to be fitted and let me walk around again”, he says.

High-tech products made by WITTENSTEIN fly into space and win Formula One races. Intelligent drive systems – from the world's smallest high-performance servo drive to the latest state of the art in medical technology – are developed, produced and marketed by a team of around 1900 employees. With a blend of dedication and enthusiasm, we set benchmarks – every day – worldwide.

Immediately after leaving hospital and starting his recovery, Ben decided that he did not want to live in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. To allow the two lower limb prostheses to be fixed later in identical knee positions, the shorter right femur had to be lengthened. Ben was introduced to a doctor at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore who was the American guru on limb lengthening using external fixators. He sent Ben's X-rays to Dr. Mark Dahl, a member of the FITBONE® Center of Excellence (COE) network. COE members are specifically trained surgeons providing the highest possible competence, trust and safety when implanting FITBONE® intramedullary lengthening nails – proven in several thousand procedures worldwide. At least as important for Ben: “FITBONE® is the only nail that could be customized to a femur as short as mine”.



The FITBONE® intramedullary nail by WITTENSTEIN intens is only implanted by specially trained surgeons.

Once the distraction nail had been implanted, Ben was able to activate its growth on his own. Four times a day he used a small, lightweight remote Control Set to lengthen the nail in small steps and thus distract the bone at the recommended speed. Eleven months later the femur had grown again almost six inches.

Ben Harrow has no hesitation in recommending the FITBONE® treatment to anyone seeking to have a limb lengthened: “Without it, I would have never been able to restore my femur to the right size with such safe and pain-free treatment or get myself up and walking again”, he insists.

WITTENSTEIN SE

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Find out more about WITTENSTEIN intens and FITBONE® on <http://wittenstein-intens.com>

YouTube videos on FITBONE®:

“The technology story” of Captain Ben Harrow:

<http://intens.wittenstein.de/en-en/company/fitbone-for-patients/>

Limb lengthening – Specialists speak about the benefits of the FITBONE® method:

<http://intens.wittenstein.de/en-en/company/fitbone-for-surgeons/>

Photos:



1. The FITBONE® intramedullary nail by WITTENSTEIN intens is only implanted by specially trained surgeons.



2. Thanks to the FITBONE®-method Ben Harrow is able to do sports again successfully.

Texts and photographs in printable quality can be downloaded from presse.wittenstein.de

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WITTENSTEIN intens GmbH

Intelligent implants based on miniaturized drive technology are the main focus of WITTENSTEIN intens' activities. To take just one example: the FITBONE® is the world's only motorized, controllable and fully implantable intramedullary distraction nail for lengthening human limbs. It is used to correct leg length inequalities and joint malalignments. This mechatronic system facilitates an economical treatment concept characterized by a high level of patient comfort as well as short hospitalization and therapy periods.

WITTENSTEIN intens GmbH is one of eight Business Units of WITTENSTEIN SE.

WITTENSTEIN SE – one with the future

With around 2000 employees worldwide and sales of € 302* million in 2015/16, WITTENSTEIN SE enjoys an impeccable reputation for innovation, precision and excellence in the field of mechatronic drive technology – not just in Germany but internationally. The group comprises eight pacesetting Business Units with separate subsidiaries for servo gearheads, servo actuator systems, medical technology, miniature servo units, innovative gearing technology, rotary and linear actuator systems, nano technology and electronic and software components for drive technologies. Through its 60 or so subsidiaries and agents in approximately 40 countries, WITTENSTEIN SE (www.wittenstein.de) is additionally represented in all the world's major technology and sales markets.

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