

The view of Jerusalem from Dr. Jaffe's Center for Foot Surgery



## Medical Milestone

DMC physician performs complex reconstructive surgery in Israel.

**Melanie Moss**

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**Y**ear after year, new distinctions are added to our country's list of medical accomplishments. If we break, disfigure or dismember any part of our body, chances are there is a doctor nearby who can put us back together again.



**Dr. Lefkowitz**



**Dr. Jaffe**

For example, take Michigan native and DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital podiatric surgeon Dr. Harvey Mark Lefkowitz, whose cutting-edge medical techniques have made him known locally and internationally. Lefkowitz believes that America's medical advancements are a privilege that should be shared with others. This has set him on a course toward giving back to a country his ancestors and modern-day family members call home.

Israel, to the average person, seems millions of miles away, but to Lefkowitz it is a country he carries close to his heart. To him, it's a country that birthed a culture of people who

stand up for their beliefs. A country in which he takes pride in its history and the care it gives his two adult daughters and their families.

Lefkowitz's story began long ago when his mother, a Holocaust survivor, was devastated by the death of her medical-school-bound brother at the hands of Hitler's soldiers during World War II. That sorrow motivated Lefkowitz to become everything his uncle could have been.

Twenty-four years later, Lefkowitz became the youngest podiatrist in Michigan and has achieved many distinctions. Only recently did he receive, from Dr. Richard Jaffe, Israel's chief of podiatry, an offer of a lifetime — an opportunity to give back to the country that he will forever carry in his heart.

In March, Lefkowitz, went to Jerusalem to perform reconstructive surgery on orthopedic surgeon and former chief medical officer to the United Nations Dr. Yaacov Adler. The complex surgical technique, which is not performed by Israeli doctors, required Lefkowitz to reconstruct a flat foot and ruptured ankle tendon.

Jerusalem is a modern city with universal healthcare, but does not always offer procedures that go that extra mile. The need for more advanced procedures motivates doctors like Lefkowitz to share their expertise with their international colleagues, like Jaffe, to perform special-

ized procedures.

After eight days in Jerusalem, Lefkowitz successfully performed the foot surgery, leaving Adler's recovery in Jaffe's care. Lefkowitz returned to the U.S. feeling a sense of accomplishment. Jaffe, with Lefkowitz's assistance, was the catalyst in introducing a new procedure to Israel. Together, Lefkowitz and Jaffe see this as just the beginning of a mutually rewarding relationship.

"It is important for physicians here to realize how fortunate we are to have all the instruments and protocols in place that allow us to do the wonderful things we can for patients here in the U.S.," says Lefkowitz. "I think it is important for all physicians to share their expertise around the world ... and take a more active role in reaching out worldwide rather than just here in our own community."

To date, Lefkowitz has trained more than 50 resident doctors who have gone on to leadership roles in their state and national organizations. He has lectured both locally as well as internationally on foot and ankle surgery.

Lefkowitz maintains private practices in Ferndale, Milford and Commerce Township and shares those responsibilities with associate and partner physicians. He has held leadership positions in both hospitals, community organizations and continues to publish in medical journals and lends a helping hand to other physicians when asked to assist in complex surgical procedures. □

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