Beaumont Hospital, Troy Is First in Michigan to Perform Single-Incision Robotic Surgery to Remove Gallbladder

The Associated Press

A surgical team at Beaumont Hospital, Troy performed Michigan's first single-incision, robotic-assisted gallbladder removal surgery (laparoscopic cholecystectomy) on Wednesday, Feb. 22.

Led by Bruce McIntosh, M.D., chief of General Surgery, Beaumont, Troy, the team removed the gallbladders of three local patients through robotic surgeries through a belly button incision of less than one inch. The Food and Drug Administration approved the new procedure in Dec. 2011 for the Intuitive da Vinci@ Robotic Surgical System.

"While robotic surgery and single incisions are not new, combining the two to remove the gallbladder requires special training and equipment," says Dr. McIntosh. "To be the first hospital in Michigan to offer this technically advanced surgery demonstrates Beaumont's leadership in providing patients with the latest, minimally invasive surgical options." Dr. McIntosh is one of 16 surgeons in the country who has received special training to perform the surgery.

Benefits of the new surgery can include minimal scarring, less pain, less bleeding, faster recovery and a shorter hospital stay, enhancing quality and safety and improving patient satisfaction. The surgery can be performed in less than one hour with a typical hospital stay of two hours.

During the procedure, the surgeon sits at a console viewing 3-D, high-definition images while using controls below the display to move robotic arms with attached surgical instruments. The system translates the surgeon's hand, wrist and finger movements into precise, real-time movements of surgical instruments inside the patient.

Unlike traditional robotic surgeries that require three to four small incisions used as access ports for the robotic arms, the new technology allows for a single incision at the belly button where instruments are placed and the diseased organ is removed.

Most people who require gallbladder removal are candidates for the robotic, single-incision surgery. According to the American College of Surgeons, surgery is the recommended treatment for gallbladder pain from gallstones and nonfunctioning gallbladders.

About 1.2 million gallbladder removal surgeries are performed in the U.S. each year, including about 12,000 performed in metro Detroit.

It's estimated that 80 percent of elective gallbladder removal surgeries could be done using the single-port, robotic-assisted approach.

Beaumont offers various types of robotic-assisted surgeries at its three hospitals in Grosse Pointe, Royal Oak and Troy. In addition to gallbladder removal, Beaumont surgeons perform robotic-assisted surgery in urology, gynecology, cardiology, general surgery and oncology. Beaumont also offers a wide range of non-robotic, minimally invasive laparoscopic surgeries.

For information on robotic and other minimally invasive surgeries at Beaumont, call 800-633-7377.

Media Advisory: Stacy Colton, 40, director of Camp Quality, an organization for children with cancer, and hair stylist from Chesterfield Township, was one of the first patients to have single-incision robotic assisted gallbladder surgery. She is available for media interviews by calling Beaumont Media Relations representatives at 248-551-0740.

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