Mount Sinai Robotic Prostate Cancer Surgeon Calls for National Standards

Globe Newswire

Accountability for surgical outcomes falls on surgeon not robot, says robotic prostate surgeon, David Samadi, MD

As the popularity of robotic surgeries climb, so too do claims of surgical errors. Why the sudden jump in robotic surgery mishaps? Some say odds, some say lack of surgeon experience. According to prostate cancer expert, Dr. David B. Samadi, more stringent robotic surgery training requirements are needed to further protect patients.

As Chief of Robotics and Minimally Invasive Surgery and Vice Chairman of the Department of Urology at The Mount Sinai Medical Center, Dr. Samadi is on the short list of surgeons around the world with a high volume of robotic prostate surgeries. He has performed more than 4,500 robotic prostate cancer surgeries, employing the da Vinci surgical robot in his highly-regarded SMART (Samadi Modified Advanced Robotic Technique) prostate removal procedure.

During recent appearances on Fox 5 News [1], Dr. Samadi stressed the safety of robotic surgery with one critical caveat--the robot does not perform the surgery. That responsibility, he says, falls squarely in the hands of the surgeon.

"The robot is a tremendous technology that reduces time in the operating room and improves patient recovery. But you have to know what you're doing; the learning curve cannot be overlooked," he says.

Robotic surgery is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and according to Intuit Surgical, Inc., da Vinci robot manufacturer, the robot has FDA clearance "for use by trained physicians in an operating room environment in accordance with representative, specific procedures set forth in the Professional Instructions for Use."

Concern exists, however, that those training recommendations may be "watered down" by some hospitals eager to acquire and promote the innovative technology. "Many hospital-level requirements for performing robotic surgery are insufficient," cautions Dr. Samadi. "We're now seeing the fallout of institutions that may have rushed to market with a shiny new robot and less experienced surgeons. My hope is that the FDA can lead us to enforced national standards for robotic surgeon training and specific procedure experience. Our patients deserve that level of safety and assurance."

With his SMART robotic prostate removal surgery, Dr. Samadi draws on a triumvirate of surgical experience. Long before his 12 years as a robotic surgeon,

Dr. Samadi was highly successful in traditional and laparoscopic urologic surgery, techniques he actively employs today. That foundation ensures that the robot remains what it should--a surgical tool for enhancing prostate cancer treatment outcomes. Dr. Samadi urges all men considering robotic prostate surgery to ask targeted questions about their surgeon's experience, operating protocol, and success record.

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