

Robotic surgery machine provides UTMC patients unmatched surgical treatment

By Jon Strunk

Nov 16, 2007

Leaders for years in performing minimally invasive urologic surgery with less tissue damage and much faster healing times, University of Toledo Medical Center now has the da Vinci® S HD™ Surgical System, the newest generation of robotic surgical technology, to augment the region's most experienced minimally invasive urologic surgeons.



Dr. Matthew Rutter demonstrated the da Vinci S HD at the UT Medical Center.

nearly 1,000 of the minimally invasive urologic procedures. He was first in the region to remove a prostate via laparoscopic surgery and has performed more than 100 minimally invasive kidney procedures during his time at UT.

“To have the newest da Vinci technology is also important from an educational point of view,” Rutter said. “It’s essential that the next generation of surgeons learn on the most modern technology available.”

According to Rutter, patients' expectations are driving the move toward robotic surgeries. He said da Vinci is rapidly becoming the standard of care patients demand — with this machine, UT is at the forefront.

For example, Rutter said that five years ago, 4 percent of all prostate removal surgeries (prostatectomies) were done with the robotic machine. Last year it was about 40 percent. In 2007, the estimate is that 70 percent of all prostatectomies will use da Vinci and in the next five years, the figure could be as high as 90 percent.

“And that’s just one type of urologic surgery,” he said, identifying kidney operations and more than 20 other minimally invasive procedures he can perform using da Vinci.

“The da Vinci S HD is just the latest example of UTMC’s dedication to performing surgeries while minimizing the parts of the body affected by the procedure as well as the time needed to recover,” said Mark Chastang, vice president and executive director of UTMC.

Chastang added that while UTMC’s da Vinci S HD is dedicated to inpatient procedures, its minimally invasive nature speaks to a larger health-care philosophy that UT has holistically embraced.

UTMC is the only hospital in the area currently operating the latest generation of this equipment.

The da Vinci S HD consists of four, thin robotic arms inserted into strategically placed incisions, often no bigger than a centimeter. Physicians sit at a console unit off to the side of the operating table and, with hand and foot controls and a 3-D, high-definition view, conduct the surgery.

“The da Vinci S HD provides doctors with increased visibility, more precise control and a wider range of motion,” said Dr. Matthew Rutter, UT assistant professor of urology, who performed the first da Vinci surgery at UTMC Sept. 25. “It minimizes scars, pain, recovery time, risk of infection, hospital stay — about the only thing increasing is UTMC patients’ peace of mind.”

Since 2002, when he was recruited to UTMC to start a laparoscopic urologic surgery program, Rutter has performed