



## Lourdes Expands Robotic Surgery Options to GYN Surgery

Minimally Invasive Approaches Advancing Women's Surgery Options at Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center

It may sound like science fiction, but robots are becoming a reality in the operating room. One example? Gynecologic surgery. For women undergoing these procedures, robotics mean surgery with less pain, blood loss and time in the hospital. Until recently, procedures such as hysterectomy and fibroid removal could be performed by open abdominal surgery or laparoscopic surgery, a technique that uses a camera and tools inserted into the body through small incisions. Now, robotic surgery improves upon laparoscopic techniques.

"Robotic-assisted surgery can be useful during hysterectomies and procedures to treat endometriosis, reverse tubal ligation and remove fibroids while preserving the uterus," says Gerald Burke, M.D., chief of the Section of Reproductive Endocrinology at Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center. Lourdes is one of only a few regional centers offering this surgical advance.

### Improved Vision, Flexibility

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the da Vinci® Surgical System for gynecologic procedures in 2005. The robot does not replace the surgeon, but enhances the ability to perform intricate procedures. The surgeon sits near the patient and looks into a viewfinder at a crisp, three-dimensional image. The surgeon's fingers manipulate master controls, while the system translates the surgeon's hand, wrist and finger movements to the da Vinci's "arms" and the instruments inside the patient. This approach gives the surgeon unparalleled access and vision.

**"Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center has the largest experience in robotic gynecologic oncology in South Jersey – and experience counts when it comes to your health."**

— Howard Saul, D.O. Gynecologic Oncologist

Howard Saul, D.O., a gynecologic oncologist on staff at Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center, says the da Vinci's 3-D vision and enhanced flexibility provide easier access to hard-to-reach areas. "The degree of freedom of movement and visualization allows us to do more procedures through smaller and smaller incisions," Dr. Saul says. "The ability to suture is superior." In addition, these advancements make many robot-assisted surgeries faster than traditional techniques.

### Special Training

Physicians who use robotics must undergo special training and perform a prescribed number of cases to be certified as

Open Hysterectomy Incision      da Vinci Hysterectomy Incisions

### Benefits of da Vinci® Gynecologic Surgery Include:

Five half-inch or smaller incisions, versus a large abdominal incision for the traditional open approach

- Decreased blood loss
- Reduced risk of infection
- Better cosmetic incision
- Shortened hospital stay
- Decreased postoperative pain
- Faster return to regular activities
- Reduced pain, trauma and threat to surrounding organs and nerves

proficient. "Although the equipment is helpful in many ways, you still need highly skilled surgeons for the procedures to be successful," Dr. Burke says.

A number of Lourdes gynecologists are now performing da Vinci surgery. The da Vinci is a versatile system that can be used across multiple specialties including urology, where Lourdes urologists are employing the system to treat conditions such as prostate cancer. For a list of physicians now using the da Vinci® Surgical System at Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center, call 1-888-LOURDES.



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For more information about robot-assisted surgery at Lourdes, a list of surgeons who perform this procedure or to receive a free brochure, call 1-888-LOURDES (568-7337).