

NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

HALIFAX REGIONAL OFFERS MINIMALLY INVASIVE OPTION FOR HYSTERECTOMIES

New Procedure Results In Shorter Recovery Times and Less Discomfort

ROANOKE RAPIDS, NC - (9-30-08) - Halifax Regional is now offering a minimally invasive gynecological procedure that reduces the discomfort from surgery and reduces recovery time for hysterectomies, the second most common surgery performed in the United States.

"The total time that the procedure takes is only about 45 minutes," said Tom McDonald, MD, a board certified obstetrician-gynecologist who introduced the procedure at Halifax Regional. "The minimally invasive procedure requires only a few small incisions and results in minimal scarring," he added.

A hysterectomy is a major surgery in which the uterus is removed. Women frequently have the procedure because of concerns about fibroid tumors, excessive uterine bleeding, pelvic pain or painful menstrual cycles.

Kim Lyons of Roanoke Rapids chose the laparoscopic method. "I needed a surgical option that would allow a quick recovery," she said. "The laparoscopic method was the least invasive and did not cause a lot of discomfort."

Lyons was discharged from the Medical Center a few hours after her surgery. She resumed household activities the next afternoon. "My mother had a standard hysterectomy a few years ago. She was shocked at how well I was doing the day after my surgery," Lyons added. Not all patients recover at the same rate, points out McDonald.

“I was nervous about having surgery,” said Penny Strickland, also of Roanoke Rapids, another patient of McDonald’s. “The fact that the surgery did not require a large incision or a stay at the Medical Center really helped to calm my fears,” she added. “I was sore for a couple of days after my surgery, but I was back on my feet in no time.”

A laparoscopic hysterectomy is performed using instruments that fit through small quarter-inch incisions. The first incision is made in the abdomen through which a small telescope is inserted with a light and camera at the tip, allowing the surgeon to see the area on a monitor. Then, two more incisions are made so specialized instruments can reach the uterus.

Typically, patients who choose a laparoscopic hysterectomy over other methods can resume light duty tasks within a few days and return to work after a couple of weeks. The laparoscopic option is quite different from the conventional hysterectomy, which resulted in considerable discomfort and a significant recovery time for patients.

Lyons and Strickland agree that the laparoscopic option was the best one for them. “If your doctor recommends a hysterectomy, don’t wait,” said Lyons. “I’ve had no regrets.”

For more information about the options for hysterectomies, call McDonald at Women’s Health Specialists at 252.535.1414.

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About Halifax Regional

Halifax Regional Medical Center is licensed for 206 beds, including psychiatric and nursery. A non-profit organization, Halifax Regional is fully accredited by the Joint Commission. For more information, visit www.halifaxregional.us.