

Surgery for the 21st Century

An avid skier and devotee of spinning classes, Colleen Gilson worried major surgery—and a long recovery—would be a big disruption in her life. But that was before she learned about Overlake’s new da Vinci Surgical System, a highly sophisticated tool that is an alternative to both traditional open surgery and laparoscopy.

It was February when the Maple Valley resident learned she needed a hysterectomy and removal of cysts on her ovaries. One of her first thoughts was: *Will I be able to go on my ski vacation in March?*

After speaking with Pamela Paley, MD, a gynecologic surgeon affiliated with Overlake, Colleen, 51, was happy to hear the benefits the new surgical technique would offer. These included smaller incisions, less blood loss, less pain and a faster recovery time—making the surgery less invasive and her ski trip entirely doable. “The da Vinci shows the strides that medicine has made,” says Colleen. “It just makes more sense than having a nine-inch incision.”

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

Overlake’s recent acquisition of the \$2.2 million da Vinci system underscores its commitment to providing state-of-the-art care.

Though frequently called the “da Vinci robot,” it’s carefully controlled by a surgeon at all times. Surgery begins with several small incisions through which instruments and a tiny high-definition camera are inserted into a patient’s body. The surgeon sits at a console

in the operating room and views a magnified 3-D image of the surgical field while precisely controlling the system’s four robotic arms.

“The da Vinci is like an extension of the surgeon’s hands,” says Kenneth Rush, RN, director of perioperative services at Overlake. “But unlike the human hand, it has a 360-degree range of motion and compensates for tremors. Plus the camera magnifies the operative site tenfold.” Rush estimates Overlake will perform 240 gynecologic and urologic surgeries with the da Vinci over the next year (see box) and adds, “we’re fortunate to have physicians on our staff who are highly skilled in robotic surgery.”

Colleen is delighted with the results. Her hysterectomy was successful, and, thanks to the da Vinci’s detailed imagery, her surgeon identified a mass on Colleen’s appendix and removed it at the same time. The operation lasted less than three hours, and Colleen spent just one night in the hospital. Perhaps best of all, she didn’t miss a minute of her ski trip. “Two weeks after the surgery, I was at 11,000 feet, skiing steep chutes in Utah,” she says. “I am doing great and am grateful to Overlake for such a terrific outcome.”

DA VINCI PROCEDURES AT OVERLAKE

Urology: pyeloplasties, partial nephrectomies and radical prostatectomy procedures.

Gynecology: sacrocolpopexy, hysterectomy and myomectomy.

For more information about robotic surgical services at Overlake, visit www.overlakehospital.org/RoboticSurgery, or call 425-688-5030.

