

HEALTH, MIND & *Body*

THE *da Vinci* SURGICAL SYSTEM

A New Era of Surgical Services at Gordon Hospital

October 2016

Calhoun
magazine

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A New Era of Surgical Services



GORDON HOSPITAL'S ROBOTIC SURGERY TEAM

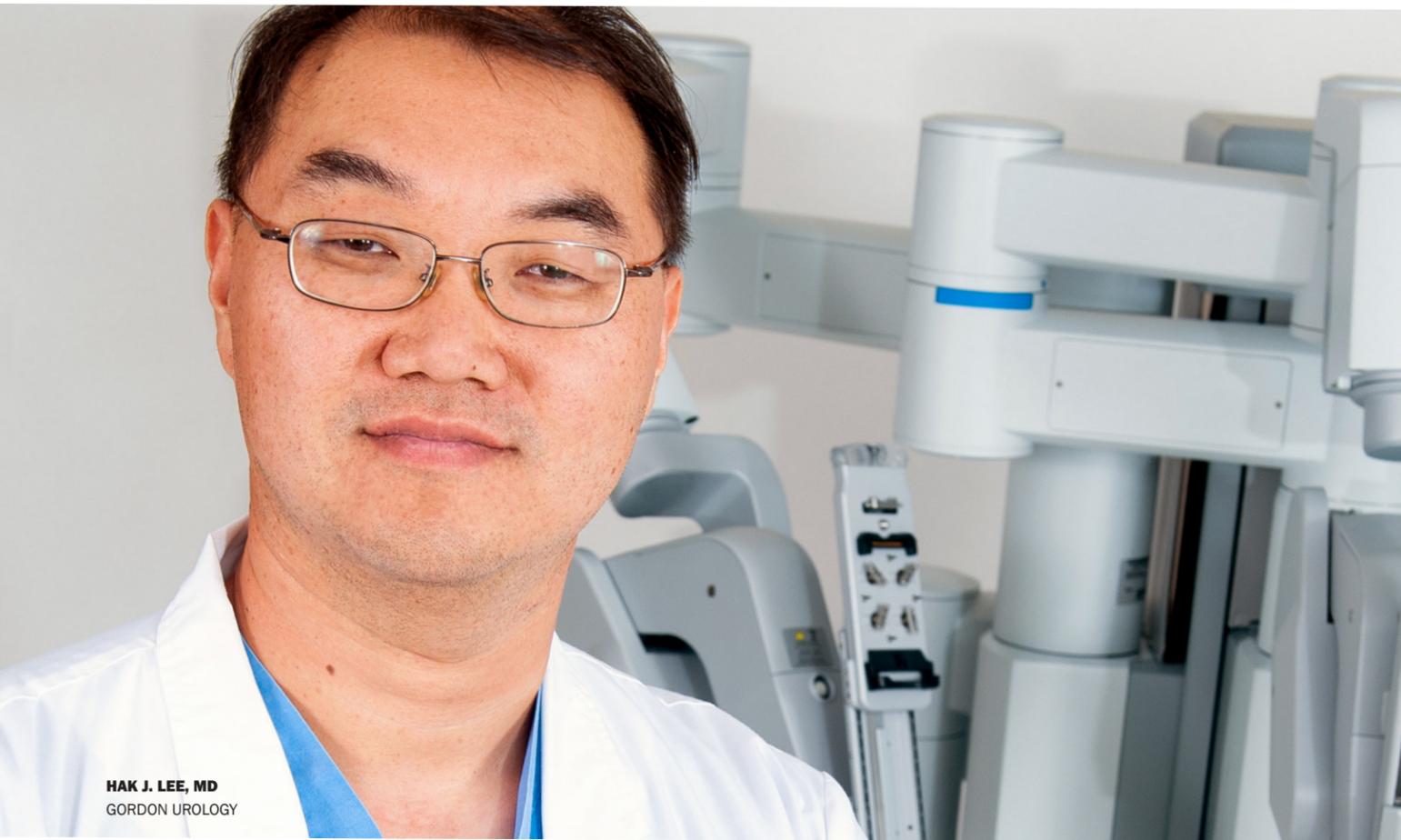
Residents of Gordon County are quickly discovering the advantages of robotic surgery. Reduced blood loss, shorter hospitalization, quicker recovery times, faster return to work, reduced pain and discomfort, decreased pain medication, smaller incisions, and minimal scarring, are just some of the advantages offered by the *da Vinci* robotic surgical system and the robotic surgery team at Gordon Hospital.

Now patients don't have to travel to Atlanta or Chattanooga. The team at Gordon Hospital has the latest surgical technology and best trained physicians and support staff in the region.

"For Gordon Hospital to have this technology, it really is a blessing for this community," said Vernon Gipson, director of surgery.

The introduction of the *da Vinci* surgical system has sparked a robotics movement at Gordon Hospital. While the system is currently being used by Gordon Urology's Hak J. Lee, MD, for urologic procedures and Northwest Georgia Women's Care's Rob Dyar, MD, for gynecologic procedures, Gordon is already looking to expand its robotics services. The *da Vinci* surgical system is capable of performing numerous types of minimally invasive procedures, enabling Gordon Hospital to provide its surgical patients with even higher quality healthcare.

The *da Vinci* surgical system is the latest in robotic surgical technologies. Surgeons use the system by operating through a few small incisions with a 3D high-definition vision system and wristed instruments that act more efficiently than human hands. The *da Vinci* system provides an outlet for multiple types of minimally invasive procedures including cardiac, colorectal, gynecological, head and neck, thoracic, urologic, and general surgeries.



HAK J. LEE, MD
GORDON UROLOGY

With less patient discomfort and improved results, minimally invasive surgery using robotic systems has become an increasingly popular option over traditional open surgery. Patient benefits of robotic-assisted surgery are a shorter hospitalization period, quicker healing and return to normal activity, reduced blood loss, and reduced post-procedure pain. For the physician using the robot, advantages include an enhanced and magnified view of inside the patient's body, instruments that bend and rotate farther than human hands, and overall enhanced precision and control.

Further advancements in surgical robotic technology are already occurring as more surgical specialties move toward using systems like *da Vinci*. Some expectations of robotic technology in the future involve single arm and single site robotics that would limit the number of incision sites and use the natural orifices of the body. There are also some expected developments in fluoroscopic imaging, which would then likely improve the outcomes of robotic procedures even further.

Though the *da Vinci* system provides enhanced vision and precision, it is important to remember that the surgeon using the robot is even more important than the technology. The key to successful robotic-assisted surgeries is the experience and proficiency that is gained through extensive training. It is also crucial to have a team of robotic-trained nurses,

an anesthesiologist, and technicians who assist the surgeon throughout the surgery.

Dr. Lee is Gordon Hospital's first physician to be trained and certified in *da Vinci* robotics, and he is the region's only robotic-trained urologic oncologist. He completed his six-year urology residency at the University of California, Irvine, and his two-year urologic oncology fellowship at the University of California San Diego Health System. Within both programs, Dr. Lee received specialized training in minimally invasive surgery in laparoscopy and robotics. In addition to his training, he completed a year of research on laparoscopic and robotic surgery.

As a urologic oncologist, Dr. Lee has performed a variety of robotic-assisted surgeries using the *da Vinci* surgical system. He looks to provide his patients with any surgical procedure that will give them the greatest benefit.

Wanda Rogers, a surgical patient of Dr. Lee, had a routine colonoscopy and an indentation was found in her colon. She then had a CAT scan which revealed that she had an enlarged appendix and her right kidney needed to be removed. Once this was determined, Rogers was referred to Dr. Lee.

"When I found out that I needed surgery, Dr. Lee scheduled it immediately. I didn't have to wait around and worry about it," said Rogers. "He explained the results of my CAT scan and the surgery in a way that my husband and I completely understood."

"It's important for us to closely monitor and follow each patient. The most important thing to me is that we continue to have above-average outcomes and the highest possible success rate among our patients."

-Hak J. Lee, MD

Dr. Lee decided that it would be best to have Rogers' appendix and right kidney removed in the same surgery so she wouldn't have two recovery periods. Choosing to have a robotic-assisted surgery benefited Rogers greatly by reducing her post-surgery pain and allowing quicker healing.

"I don't feel like I had surgery," said Rogers. "My incisions felt more like small scratches, so pain wasn't an issue. I had a hysterectomy in 2001, and it was a traditional surgery. I was very sore, and it was hard to walk afterwards. My robotic surgery didn't stop me from walking around, and I wasn't as sore."

The most recent addition to the Gordon Hospital robotic surgery team is Rob Dyar, MD. Dr. Dyar is a board-certified OB/GYN and uses the *da Vinci* surgical system for gynecological surgeries.

"The robot provides us with so many advantages over traditional surgery," said Dr. Dyar. "When we are operating with the *da Vinci*, the magnification and complete range of motion allows us to be extremely precise, which makes for a really beautiful surgery."

While the surgeons are the ones operating the robot, Dr. Lee is quick to point out that the success of Gordon Hospital's robotics program has everything to do with the entire team involved, which includes a robotic surgery coordinator, surgical techs, nurses, and more.



ROB DYAR, MD
NORTHWEST GEORGIA
WOMEN'S CARE

Sharon Bass, RN, serves as the robotic surgery coordinator. Bass works closely with each patient and their family members prior to the surgery, letting them know what to expect and helping them prepare for the surgery. After the surgery, Bass works even closer with each patient. Even though most patients are up and walking the same day as the surgery, Bass calls the patients every day for several weeks to check and make sure everything is healing properly and they get back to normal as quickly as possible.

"Of course we are excited about providing this new service to our Northwest Georgia community," said Dr. Lee. "But it's important for us to closely monitor and follow each patient. The most important thing to me is that we continue to have above-average outcomes and the highest possible success rate among our patients. That's when we know that we are doing good work."

Dr. Lee, Dr. Dyar, and the entire robotic surgery team are making a significant difference in the lives of patients in Northwest Georgia. Their commitment to excellence is a big step forward in providing world-class healthcare right here at home.