

Healthy Directions

Summer 2010

A new approach to surgery



Mercy introduces robotic hysterectomy

BY MICKEY MILLER

TRADITIONALLY, women who undergo hysterectomy, the surgical removal of the uterus, need six weeks to recover. In our fast-paced world, being out of commission for that long may not be realistic—or desirable—for most women.

Women considering hysterectomy have a new option at Mercy Iowa City—the da Vinci robotic surgical system.

The da Vinci system has been used by Mercy urologists for prostate surgery since 2008. In recent months, Mercy gynecologists Diane Adam, MD; Mia Clevenger, MD; and Margaret Smollen, MD, began using the system for gynecologic surgery. Although not every woman is a candidate for the robotic approach, it can provide many benefits for the right patients.

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WHY IT MAY BE NEEDED

Hysterectomy, the second most common surgery among women in the U.S., is performed for a variety of conditions, including gynecologic cancer, fibroids, endometriosis, uterine prolapse or persistent abnormal vaginal bleeding.

Need a physician? Call Mercy On Call at 319-358-2767 or toll-free at 800-358-2767 seven days a week.

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8 Join us for the latest information about head and neck cancer



WEIGHT LOSS

Look forward

to a healthier you

KAY BARKER went on her first diet when she was a teenager. More than five decades and many diets later, she finally got it right.

“I lost 91 pounds. It took me 15 months, but I did it,” says Barker.

What tipped the balance for Barker was

visiting her mom in a nursing home.

“I realized that if I wanted to stay as healthy as possible for as long as possible, I had to start now,” she says.

Barker’s story proves that it’s never too late to start healthy eating habits—and to shed unwanted pounds. That’s a good

Interested in a group weight-management program?
Call Mercy On Call at 319-358-2767 to learn about
the next 12-week session of Mercy LifeSteps.

thing, because across the United States, people of all ages are in need of such a change.

BALANCING CALORIES

The reasons behind all these extra pounds boil down to one simple equation, says Christine Gerbstadt, MD, RD, spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association (ADA): If you take in more calories than you expend, your body will save the excess in fat.

“We eat too much and exercise too little,” she says. “And the easiest food is usually the least nutritious choice—high in calories, high in fat, and low in nutrients and fiber.”

Think fast food, such as burgers and fries. And think soft drinks, which are packed with sugar. Combine these foods with too much time in front of a TV or computer instead of being active, and the result is weight gain.

A GOOD FIT

We're all at the mercy of the calorie equation. The key is to turn it around and use it to your advantage—take in fewer calories and expend more.

A good place to start is to know your body mass index, or BMI, a measure of body fat based on height and weight.

You can calculate your BMI this way: Multiply your weight by 703. Divide that number by your height in inches, squared.

You can also use this link from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute: www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bmicalc.htm.

A BMI of 25 to 29 usually signals overweight, and one of 30 or above means obesity.

The next step is to be sure you're ready to lose weight. That isn't as easy as it sounds, but according to Dr. Gerbstadt, it's essential.

“You have to make a conscious decision to change the way you eat,” she says.

If you're not ready to make the commitment, you may be setting yourself up for failure.

Another way to invite failure is to set unreasonable goals, according to Gary Foster, PhD, the 2007–2008 president of The Obesity Society.

“Instead of making dramatic changes that won't last, make small changes that will,” he says. That way your weight loss will be gradual and easier to maintain.

And have a plan for when your willpower slips—having a cookie should trigger an adjustment in your eating that day, not a diet meltdown.

With that advice in mind, follow these tips from the ADA and other medical experts:

Keep a food diary. It makes you conscious of what you eat and points out problem areas.

Read food labels. Know how many calories you eat. Low-fat doesn't necessarily mean low-calorie.

Limit eating high-calorie foods. They include chips, fried foods, full-fat dairy products, oils, and sugar-sweetened beverages.

Eat more vegetables and whole grains

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GOBBLE UP THIS ADVICE!

Don't deprive yourself. Instead of ruling out treats, limit them to special occasions and enjoy them without guilt.

American Dietetic Association

Health risks of being overweight

It's no secret that our nation has a weight problem. Two out of three American adults are overweight or obese, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Carrying around extra pounds is far more than just a cosmetic issue—it's a major health risk. People who are overweight or obese are at higher risk than those of normal weight for a long list of medical problems, including:

- ✓ High blood pressure.
- ✓ Heart disease and stroke.
- ✓ Certain types of cancer—including cancer of the colon, kidney or uterus and some breast cancers.
- ✓ Diabetes.
- ✓ Osteoarthritis.
- ✓ Gout.
- ✓ Gallbladder disease.
- ✓ Sleep apnea.
- ✓ Gynecological problems (abnormal menstrual periods and infertility).

The good news: The prevalence of obesity in both men and women in the U.S. appears to have leveled off, according to the CDC.



EAT MORE VEGETABLES and whole grains at each meal. They contain vitamins and minerals and fill you up faster.

Look forward to a healthier you

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at each meal. They contain vitamins and minerals and fill you up faster.

Eat slowly. This will help you know when you are full.

Watch portion sizes. It's a good idea to eat a little less of everything all the time, Dr. Foster says.

Eat breakfast, and don't put it off. The sooner you eat after waking, the more calories you'll burn that day, says Dr. Gerbstadt.

Get plenty of sleep. People who sleep less than seven hours a night gain weight more easily.

Be active. Many people need more than 150 minutes of aerobic exercise a week to prevent weight gain. And some will need to do more than 300 minutes (five hours) a week to lose weight or maintain weight loss.

Walking, jogging and riding a bicycle are good ways to burn calories. The im-

portant thing is to keep it up. People who exercise are more likely to maintain their weight loss than people who are sedentary, Dr. Foster says.

HEALTHY FOR LIFE

You should expect your weight to fluctuate over the long run. And that's where having a plan comes in.

"You have to expect that you will regain some pounds," says Dr. Foster.

When that happens, respond quickly. Cut back on calories right away—success means reversing a 3- to 5-pound weight gain before it becomes a 30- to 50-pound gain.

Kay Barker will tell you that keeping the weight off is a lifelong challenge. But it's well worth it, she says.

"I have much more energy now, and I just feel better," she says. "I still have to work at it, but in the end you have to take care of yourself."

JUMP-START WEIGHT LOSS

A weight-loss plateau occurs when you temporarily stop losing weight or even gain a small amount.

"You can jump-start your weight loss by just eliminating 20 calories and adding 10 minutes of activity each day," says Christine Gerbstadt, MD, RD, spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association. "Skip the cream in your coffee or the sugar in your tea for a week. You'll break through the plateau."

GETTING STUCK

When you reach a weight-loss plateau

It's best to lose weight slowly. In fact, losing just ½ to 1 pound a week is about right, advises the American Dietetic Association (ADA).

But as you watch your weight drop, be prepared for the inevitable—you will reach a plateau.

"It happens to everyone," says Christine Gerbstadt, MD, RD, spokeswoman for the ADA. "Expect it, and don't get discouraged."

A plateau is when you temporarily stop losing weight or even gain a small amount.

It happens because even if you maintain exactly the same calorie intake, your energy expenditure is bound to change.

For example, you may be eating breakfast at a different time, which can change your metabolism that day. Or you may be walking a little less. When it happens, don't worry.

"You can jump-start your weight loss



• Skip the cream in your coffee for a week, and you could break through the plateau.

by just eliminating 20 calories and adding 10 minutes of activity each day," says Dr. Gerbstadt. "Skip the cream in your coffee or the sugar in your tea for a week. You'll break through the plateau."

Welcome, new medical staff members

Seyed Hashemi, MD

Specialty: Internal medicine
Mercy Hospitalist Program

Gabriela Cherascu, MD

Specialty: Psychiatry
Mercy Inpatient Psychiatry
Program

Want to find a Mercy doctor who suits your needs? Just visit www.findamercydoctor.com or call Mercy On Call at 319-358-2767 or toll-free at 800-358-2767. Mercy On Call is available seven days a week, 7 a.m. to midnight.

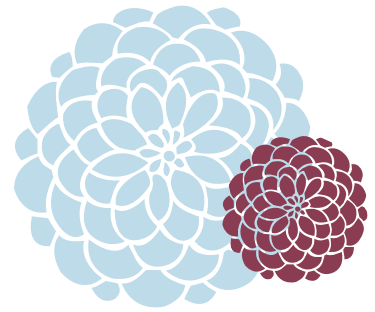


Mercy Foundation endows inpatient psychiatry unit

Under Medical Director Janeta Tansey, MD, PhD, Mercy's Inpatient Psychiatry Unit is moving in a new direction. Dr. Tansey says it is the first such unit in the state of Iowa to integrate evidence-based psychiatry with humanistic and complementary healing therapies to treat mind, body and spirit.

To support the unit, Mercy Hospital Foundation President Julie Johnston has announced that the Foundation will fund an endowment to help cover patient care expenses.

For more information about the endowment, call the Foundation at 319-358-2623.



More locations and services for your care

Mercy Urgent Care East Now open

Location: On the lower level of Iowa City Family Practice Clinic, 269 N. First Ave., Iowa City

Hours: Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; weekends, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and holidays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Services: Minor illness and injury care, minor procedures, laboratory and x-ray

Providers: Staffed by experienced physicians.

Just walk in! Appointments are accepted but not needed.

Mercy Family Medicine of Muscatine

Opening June 1

Location: 2104 Cedarwood, Suite 102, in Muscatine (across from Bishop Hayes Catholic School)

Hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Services: Preventive health care, prenatal care, minor illness and accident care, and lab services

Provider: Jody Harmsen, MD, is an experienced, board-certified family physician with special interests in patient education and community health.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH

For more information or to register, call
Mercy On Call at 319-358-2767 or
toll-free at 800-358-2767.



FINDING SUPPORT

COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUPS

For more information about community support groups that meet at Mercy, call Mercy On Call. They include:

- ✓ NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)
- ✓ Parkinson's Support Group
- ✓ Al-Anon

ONGOING SUPPORT GROUPS

Call Mercy On Call for dates, topics and locations.

- ✓ Breath of Fresh Air (for people living with chronic lung disease)
- ✓ Cardiac Support Group
- ✓ Continuing After Breast Cancer
- ✓ Diabetes Support Group
- ✓ Hope Cancer Support Group
- ✓ Stroke Group

FREE SLEEP APNEA SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesday, July 14, 6 to 8 p.m., McAuley room, lower level, Mercy Medical Plaza

For patients, family members, friends and partners affected by sleep apnea and other sleep disorders. Offers education on different diagnoses, CPAP and BiPAP equipment use, and guest speakers.



HEALTHY LIVING

LIFESTEPS WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Call for fall 2010 dates

A 12-session weight-management program taught by a dietitian and an exercise physiologist.

SMOKE STOPPERS

Now offered as a one-on-one program with a respiratory therapist. Smoke Stoppers helps you quit in three phases: the countdown, learning to stop and staying smoke-free. Call Mercy On Call for more information.



• Peter McDonnell, MD

VASCULAR SCREENINGS

Thursday, June 17,
Mercy Services
Coralville, 2055 Oakdale Road, Coralville,
\$99

This screening package includes a stroke/carotid artery ultrasound, an abdominal aortic ultrasound, an ankle-brachial index

and a blood pressure check. Results are reviewed by Mercy vascular surgeon Peter McDonnell, MD. To make a screening appointment, please call Mercy On Call at 319-358-2767 or toll-free at 800-358-2767.

HEAR FROM THE DOCTORS: FOCUS ON HEAD AND NECK CANCER

Saturday, Aug. 14, 9 to 11 a.m., McAuley room, lower level, Mercy Medical Plaza

See page 8 for more information about this annual community forum sponsored by Mercy Hospital Foundation.

YOUR GROWING FAMILY *Call Mercy On Call for dates and to register.*

FREE EASING THROUGH PREGNANCY

Tuesdays, Aug. 17, Oct. 19, 7 to 9 p.m., classroom 4

A one-session class that provides information and comfort measures to parents-to-be for the physical and emotional changes of first- and second-trimester pregnancy.

FREE CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION

Tuesdays, July 6, 13; Aug. 3, 10; Sept. 7, 21, 7 to 9 p.m., classroom 4, Mercy Hospital

A two-session class for couples in the third trimester of pregnancy. Class addresses labor, delivery and car seat safety and includes a tour of Mercy's Birth Care Unit.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

- ✓ Monday and Wednesday evenings
 - ✓ Refresher course on weekends
- Fee varies*

Class addresses comfort, relaxation and breathing techniques for labor and vaginal and cesarean delivery, as well as baby care, safety and parenting. Includes a tour of Mercy's Birth Care Unit. Taught by registered nurses who are certified childbirth educators.

BEGINNING WITH BABY

Sundays, July 18, Sept. 26, 1 to 5 p.m., McAuley room, lower level, Mercy Medical Plaza, \$15 per family

This one-session class addresses bringing baby home and "now what?" questions. Covers baby care, new responsibilities, parenting concerns and safety.

FREE NEW BROTHER/NEW SISTER

Mondays, July 12, Aug. 2, Sept. 13, Oct. 4, 6 p.m. and 7:15 p.m., classroom 4, Mercy Hospital

This one-session class helps children ages 3 to 12 prepare for the arrival of a new baby.

FREE CAR SEAT SAFETY

Tuesdays, Aug. 24, Oct. 26, 7 to 9 p.m., classroom 4, Mercy Hospital

A one-session class to help parents understand Iowa car seat safety laws, car seat use and types of car seats.

FREE PUT SAFETY FIRST

Tuesdays, Sept. 28, Nov. 16, 7 to 9 p.m., classroom 4, Mercy Hospital

A one-session class for parents and grandparents about childproofing strategies and home and personal safety.

HAPPIEST BABY ON THE BLOCK

Sundays, times vary. Call Mercy On Call for schedule. \$30

New babies are blessings, but they can also bring sleepless nights and stress. This one-session class is based on pediatrician Dr. Harvey Karp's approach to baby care. Topics include the fourth trimester, the calming reflex, the 5 S's and cuddle care. May be taken before or after your baby is born.

INFANT MASSAGE

Sundays, times vary. Call Mercy On Call for schedule. \$30 per family

A three-session class for parents and their 2-week-old to 7-month-old babies. Parents learn how to massage, soothe and relax their baby and help the little one sleep. Taught by a certified infant massage instructor.

BREASTFEEDING CLASS

Mondays, July 26, Nov. 15; Wednesday, Sept. 29, 6:30 to 9 p.m., first floor conference room, Mercy Hospital, \$10

A one-session class for expectant mothers (recommended before delivery). A support person is welcome to attend at no extra cost.

FREE BREASTFEEDING AND MORE

Thursdays, noon to 2 p.m., McAuley room, lower level, Mercy Medical Plaza

An informal group offering support and friendship to new mothers. No registration is necessary.

FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

"WHAT'S THE RUSH?" CONTINUING EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM

Friday, Sept. 10, Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center

A collaborative care conference on acute myocardial infarction and stroke. Continuing education credits for nurses, emergency medical services providers and physicians. Call Mercy On Call for more information.

HERE WHEN YOU NEED US

HEALTHY DIRECTIONS is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of MERCY HOSPITAL, 500 E. Market St., Iowa City, IA 52245, telephone 319-339-0300, website www.mercyiowacity.org.

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Answers over the phone

Whatever your health care need, Mercy On Call can help.

The experienced registered nurses of Mercy On Call have information about a wide array of community resources.

Just call 319-358-2767 or toll-free at 800-358-2767.



Mercy On Call toll-free: 800-358-2767

Main hospital number: 319-339-0300



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Visit us online at
www.mercyiowacity.org.

OUR MISSION

Mercy Iowa City heals and comforts the sick and works to improve the health of the community in the spirit of Jesus Christ and the Catholic tradition of the Sisters of Mercy.

A new approach to surgery

Continued from page 1

“There can be less pain, less blood loss and patients go home in about a day,” Dr. Adam says. “They may also go back to work sooner—two to three weeks compared to six weeks for traditional hysterectomy.”

Unlike the traditional hysterectomy that results in a 6- to 14-inch abdominal incision, the da Vinci system requires only small incisions. The physician views the surgical area on a video screen and controls the instruments from a remote control console in the operating room.

“The technology allows for great visualization for the surgeon,” Dr. Adam says. “It’s also a good alternative for women who have had a previous c-section and women who haven’t had children.”

In 2009, two-thirds of hysterectomies performed in Iowa were laparotomies—the traditional open procedure. In 2010, Dr. Adam says, robotic procedures are expected to increase to 25 percent of all hysterectomies.

“It’s certainly going to be the wave of the future,” Dr. Adam says. “The technology is here to stay.”

For more information or a referral to a Mercy physician, call Mercy On Call at 319-358-2767 or toll-free at 800-358-2767.

Experts on your side



• Diane Adam, MD



• Mia Clevenger, MD



• Margaret Smollen, MD

You are cordially invited... **Free!**

to the eighth annual
Mercy Hospital Foundation
Community Cancer Seminar

Hear From the Doctors: Focus on Cancers of the Head and Neck

Saturday, Aug. 14

McAuley rooms, Mercy Medical Plaza,
540 E. Jefferson St., Iowa City
8:15 to 9 a.m.—light breakfast
9 to 11 a.m.—program

Presenters:

- ✓ Hamed Tewfik, MD, radiation oncologist
- ✓ James Feeley, MD, medical oncologist
- ✓ Colin O'Brien, MD, radiologist
- ✓ Dwayne Capper, MD, otolaryngologist
- ✓ Daniel Olney, MD, otolaryngologist
- ✓ Thomas Simpson, MD, otolaryngologist
- ✓ Thomas Viner, MD, otolaryngologist
- ✓ Jeremy Vos, MD, otolaryngologist



• Hamed Tewfik, MD

RSVP to Mercy on Call at 319-358-2767. For more information, call Mercy Foundation at 319-358-2623.