

A Roundtable Discussion: Exploring Hysterectomy Options

A da Vinci® Patient's Story

July 29, 2009

fritzi64	Welcome to our daVinci Roundtable tonight!
fritzi64	We are so glad you are here.
fritzi64	This roundtable discussion hopes to provide information for hysterectomy options.
fritzi64	Often, we are limited in our medical choices by lack of information and what may be an option.
fritzi64	Hi PrincessMH
PrincessMH	Hi everyone!
fritzi64	We hope to encourage our audience members to learn as much as they can about their diagnosis and explore non-hysterectomy alternatives as well as explore hysterectomy options.
fritzi64	To help everyone follow the conversation, the chat will be moderated.
fritzi64	So when you submit a comment, it won't go through right away--so don't panic!
fritzi64	Tonight you are going to hear from a HysterSisters member who found out she had a diagnosis.
fritzi64	One doctor suggested one kind of surgery.
fritzi64	However, she explored and found other options.
fritzi64	Tonight's Roundtable discussion surrounds the topic of daVinci Hysterectomy as a hysterectomy option.
fritzi64	We have a daVinci representative in the discussion with us tonight.
fritzi64	And daVinci is our sponsor tonight.
fritzi64	If you have questions for our daVinci representative, please remember that this is only for general information and you will not be given personal answers that could be considered medical advice
fritzi64	And at the end of tonight's roundtable, we hope you will be encouraged to take further steps to gather all the information you need for your medical decisions .
fritzi64	Because daVinci is still relatively new and is something our doctors may not have experience with, we wanted to provide you with a bit more insight.
fritzi64	Here's how tonight's Roundtable will work:
fritzi64	Two of our HysterSisters hostesses, April Dawn and LookingforaSis, will be interviewing Tauruslady, also a hostess, who has had the daVinci hysterectomy procedure and will share her experiences.
fritzi64	We also have dVH Vanessa, a representative from daVinci surgery, who will be able to share some important statistics and other information about the surgery.
fritzi64	And I will be stepping in on occasion to ask the audience a few questions.
fritzi64	When I ask a question of (((HysterSisters))), that is a question for the members of our audience.
fritzi64	This Roundtable will be moderated.
fritzi64	That means that every comment you type will be held in a queue and will appear in the chat window when it fits in.
fritzi64	If you can make note of your questions and save them for the right moment, that would help me make sure things go a bit more smoothly!
fritzi64	Let's get started. April Dawn and LookingforaSis, it's all yours!
April Dawn	Tauruslady, tell us a little about yourself.

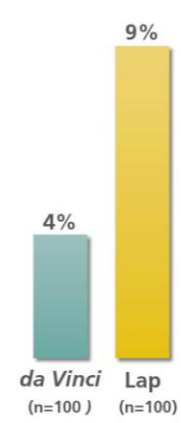
tauruslady	I live in Ohio, enjoy reading books, boating, riding horses and science fiction movies and TV.
tauruslady	I work in the IT department of a financial services company and have been married almost 29 years to the guy I consider my best friend.
April Dawn	Vanessa, can you tell us about yourself and your relationship with daVinci?
dVH Vanessa	: I work in the marketing department at Intuitive® Surgical and I help dV surgeons and hospitals to spread the word about this advanced technology.
tauruslady	
fritzi64	HysterSisters members, can you share with us one question that you hope to have answered during our time together this evening?
tauruslady	
fritzi64	I meant (((HysterSisters))).
fritzi64	And I'll post these questions so we all know what you hope to learn. Just type the questions and click on Send
fritzi64	If you look over on the right, you can see the keyboard icon while people are typing!
fritzi64	Let's move forward, since we seem to be having a small moderation problem
LookingforaSis	Tauruslady, what brought you to the hysterectomy experience?
tauruslady	During a regular gynecological visit in mid-2008, I informed my doctor of heavy bleeding during the 2nd day my monthly period.
tauruslady	I had to change ultra-super tampons every 1.5 to 2 hours.
tauruslady	Although I was 50 I wasn't experiencing any menopausal symptoms.
tauruslady	He suggested that at my age it was probably fibroids and I should probably have a D&C
tauruslady	He ordered a transvaginal ultrasound so he would have some idea of what was in there before the D&C.
tauruslady	I'd also had a recurring benign cervical polyp for years and he hoped to be able to tell what was causing it.
tauruslady	The results of the transvaginal ultrasound showed numerous small fibroids and a small mass he presumed was causing the polyp.
tauruslady	My D&C was scheduled for October 27th.
tauruslady	During the wait for my D&C my oldest sister went in for fibroid removal and they "accidentally" found sarcoma cancer during the dissection of one of the fibroids.
tauruslady	This concerned me because my mother had a hysterectomy and a bowel resection in 2007 due to endometrial and colon cancer.
tauruslady	I told my doctor and he said he would send everything out for pathology checks.
tauruslady	After the D&C and hysteroscopy the doctor said everything looked normal. In fact the uterus looked so good he hadn't even biopsied behind the mass.
tauruslady	He still sent everything for pathology review and told me not to worry and to contact him after a business and leisure trip that I was beginning the next day.
tauruslady	On Monday November 3rd, I called for my results, he called me at work at 2pm and said "The mass was a Grade 2 endometrial cancer and you need a hysterectomy now".
tauruslady	[u]Needless to say my mind went blank.
tauruslady	He started arranging the surgery in conjunction with an oncologist who would do lymph node sampling.
tauruslady	I asked why I couldn't wait for a bit since I just found out about it. All he said was he wouldn't let me wait past December.
tauruslady	I found out later, on my own, that there is a concern that a D&C and

	hysteroscopy might force cancer cells into the abdominal cavity.
LookingforaSis	So you were told that you had cancer and that you needed a hysterectomy right away. That must've been quite a shock.
tauruslady	Shock doesn't even describe it, it was more like terror and "why me".
April Dawn	What choices did your doctor say you had?
tauruslady	At my pre-op appointment later in the week, my husband and I asked about surgery options.
tauruslady	I asked if there were laproscopic options and was told "Are you more concerned about an abdominal scar or do you want to know that you are healthy and cured of the cancer?"
tauruslady	There was no mention of the daVinci procedure.
tauruslady	Since I didn't believe I had any other options my TAH / BSO was scheduled for Monday November 17th.
tauruslady	I'm a project manager by profession so I wanted no surprises.
tauruslady	I started obsessively researching hysterectomies, recovery, surgical menopause and endometrial cancer.
tauruslady	Luckily I found HysterSisters.
tauruslady	I found myself reading and posting in several forums—pre-op, post-op, and cancer concerns especially.
tauruslady	There were ads for daVinci but at that time I didn't understand what it was or that it was an option for a cancer diagnosis.
tauruslady	Late in the evening on Sunday November 9th, while showing my husband some diagrams of what would be removed in my surgery, I saw a daVinci link again and decided to check it out.
LookingforaSis	Vanessa, would it be fair to say the daVinci surgery is the next generation of laparoscopic surgery?
dVH Vanessa	Yes we believe that da Vinci Surgery allows surgeons in a minimally invasive environment to still apply open surgical techniques.
fritzi64	Okay, folks we seem to have a glitch with the moderation system.
fritzi64	I'm going to remove the moderation in just a moment so we can see your questions and responses.
fritzi64	Please bear with us while we try this.
illinifan07	I don't understand how the doctors can see better using the da vinci method as opposed to the old fashioned way of opening you up and seeing everything
fritzi64	Okay, I've removed the moderation for the next moment or so. If you could, please retype the one question you'd like to see answered tonight.
tryingtodecide	What was your recovery like after the daVinci surgery?
Seaweed63	How does it work - does the machine go in there and break everything up and then remove everything via the tiny incisions?
Windyaa	I would rather have a real live dr, then a machine doing my surgery, is it safe?
Kathy	These are great questions
illinifan07	I don't understand how the doctors can see better using the da vinci method as opposed to the old fashioned way of opening you up. How is it better?
LadyTeal	I have had a DaVinci Hyster, would not have a traditional surgery again!
fritzi64	(((HysterSisters))), if you've already scheduled a hysterectomy or if you and your doctor have decided that one is the best option for you, what surgery types have you either scheduled or talked about?
IamGeeky	I understand there is a newer model that allows 2 doctors to operate at the same time?
Windyaa	What if the robot arms go wild and cut where it is not supposed to?
PrincessMH	What's the difference between daVinci and TLH?

fritzi64	Send your questions through so dVH Vanessa can have them to think about.
fritzi64	Then we'll put the moderation back on so we can continue with Tauruslady's story.
tryingtodecide	I have a daVinci supracervical hysterectomy scheduled for 8/24
Seaweed63	I briefly discussed a regular hysto, but no way did I want that. I had a fibroid removed in 12/05 and they had to cut me 4" across and I hated it. I heard about davinci and the shorter recovery time and said that's it for me. No other options even interested me.
kitkat82	Mine is tomorrow :)
mycookiebaker	hello ladies
Windyaa	hi
April Dawn	Tauruslady, what did you expect to find out when you did your research?
tauruslady	I definitely didn't expect to find out that the daVinci was a minimally invasive procedure that could be used for cancer diagnosis.
Seaweed63	mine is Sept. 4th
tauruslady	So stunned disbelief probably best covers my reaction.
April Dawn	After doing this initial research, what was your next step?
tauruslady	I immediately linked to the main daVinci site and found doctors both locally and in locations that I would have gone to if necessary.
tauruslady	From there I went back to the HysterSisters site and started posting to see if there were sisters who had the daVinci procedure done for a cancer diagnosis
LookingforaSis	Had you ever sought a second opinion for a medical issue before? Why did you seek one now?
tauruslady	I had never really thought about a second opinion.
tauruslady	I had been with this doctor for years and had no reason to doubt his opinion.
tauruslady	Although I was concerned about his attitude to some of my pre-op visit questions, things were happening so fast I didn't think I had time to get a 2nd opinion.
tauruslady	Remember at this point I was just about 1 week away from my procedure.
tauruslady	Since both my husband and I believe that you have the right to the best surgeon and procedure for your diagnosis we started to discuss how to get a second opinion
tauruslady	On the daVinci site we found 2 daVinci trained gynecological oncologists in our area. We each took a name and were going to contact them Monday morning.
tauruslady	I also contacted a friend whose sister is a nurse anesthetist. Her sister called me, discussed daVinci and said they rarely did abdominal procedures.
tauruslady	At that moment with unwavering certainty I knew I had to get a second opinion even if it meant canceling my scheduled procedure.
LookingforaSis	Tauruslady, you should be commended for that. Many women don't seek a second opinion.
fritzi64	(((HysterSisters))), how many of you have sought a second opinion?
fritzi64	And the moderation is working now, so submit your response and I'll let it through!
tchilder	I did and my dVH is 8/5, pre-op app't 7/31
LadyTeal	My doctor recomended me to do so .
fritzi64	Anyone else seek a second opinion?
tryingtodecide	I did not since my doctor suggested the daVinci and I felt comfortable with it
IamGeeky	I have sought several opinions for what I am going through. I do not

	care what the DR thinks. My health is more important!
fritzi64	We know from a voluntary poll on Hystersisters that fewer than half our members have gotten a second opinion.
Seaweed63	No 2nd opinion. But if I had cancer I would. Mine's fibroids.
fritzi64	We, at HysterSisters, think this means our members aren't necessarily getting all options explored
fritzi64	One of our goals at HysterSisters.com is to encourage our members to be the best self-advocates they can be.
fritzi64	You deserve and owe it to yourself to explore all your treatment options
fritzi64	As women, we often have great loyalty to our doctors.
fritzi64	But we deserve to explore other options. It is not a backhand to our doctors.
fritzi64	Doctors will usually only tell us what they have the most experience with - and they may not specialize in minimally invasive or alternative treatment options.
fritzi64	There is no need to feel disloyal for asking other surgeons for input.
LookingforaSis	Tauruslady, what made it so important to you to not have an abdominal hysterectomy?
tauruslady	There were several contributing factors.
tauruslady	One was I thought it was more invasive and since this would be my first surgery ever in 50.5 years, I wanted to make it the least traumatic that I could for my body.
tauruslady	Mostly they were emotional factors falling under the broad heading "my body had betrayed me."
tauruslady	I didn't have pain just heavy bleeding so how could this be happening to me.
tauruslady	For several years I had been improving my diet and exercising more to avoid family health history issues like diabetes.
tauruslady	I felt all my efforts were wasted because somehow I had gotten cancer.
tauruslady	My DH and I had tried several options to start a family and all were unsuccessful.
tauruslady	Since I'd never been pregnant and the cancer was said to be estrogen dependent.
tauruslady	The scar would be a visual reminder of that failing which made me feel that I'd been responsible for the cancer!
tauruslady	I had wanted my 50's to be a great decade, telling people "no" to an "over the hill" party.
tauruslady	To me it was the "best is yet to come".
tauruslady	So the cancer was a kharmic jab showing me I wasn't in control, it played to my favorite quote "Life is what happens when you're making other plans".
April Dawn	Could you tell us about what happened when you began to look for a doctor who could do a daVinci hysterectomy?
tauruslady	One thing was a complete shock.
tauruslady	After receiving a letter from my husband explaining the emotional factors surrounding my desire not to have an abdominal hysterectomy my original gynecologist called with the name of one of the 2 doctors we had found on the daVinci site.
tauruslady	He said maybe I ought to talk to her
tauruslady	[b]I couldn't believe it!
tauruslady	The same person who, only days earlier, had told me I had no other options for gynecological cancer surgery was now giving me the name of a doctor that I had found on my own!
tauruslady	Second, I got in touch with the office of the doctor who would

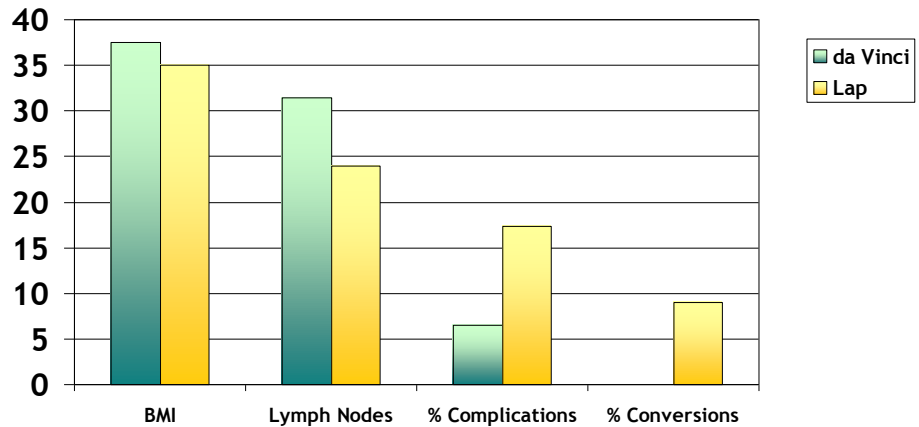
	eventually do my surgery.
tauruslady	He was out of town and not returning until Wednesday.
tauruslady	In tears I told his staff I would cancel my surgery and do anything I could to get a second opinion with him.
tauruslady	Unbelievably they got in touch with him and he agreed to come in early to see me so in case I wasn't a daVinci candidate I could proceed with my currently scheduled surgery.
tauruslady	I also contacted my GP and he was familiar with both surgeons.
tauruslady	His wife was a gynecologist and personally knew the doctor I was going to see and highly recommended him.
tauruslady	So I felt that someone was guiding me to the right path.
April Dawn	So how did your appointment go?
tauruslady	It was very affirming because I knew coming out of that appointment, regardless of outcome, that I had done everything I could to get the best surgical procedure.
tauruslady	I explained my situation to the doctor, he did a pelvic exam and asked me about previous surgeries.
tauruslady	He determined my uterus was small enough to remove vaginally,
tauruslady	the cervix would have to be removed due to the cancer diagnosis
tauruslady	and he said the chance of converting to an abdominal procedure would be very small in my case because since I had no pregnancies or other surgeries there shouldn't be any complicating adhesions.
tauruslady	Of course I still had to sign a consent form in case there was some other reason that might cause it to become an abdominal procedure
tauruslady	He diagrammed the procedure for me.
tauruslady	I asked him some questions from the HysterSister checklists,
tauruslady	ex. "how many operations have you done?"
tauruslady	"how many have converted to abdominal hysterectomies?"
tauruslady	"Is there an issue because I had never had children?"
tauruslady	He had has only a couple of surgeries convert to abdominals out of close to 100 overall
tauruslady	Everything was settled and I signed the consent form and cancelled my abdominal procedure that same day.
tauruslady	My new surgery date became November 24th, the Monday before Thanksgiving.
LookingforaSis	Tauruslady, what did the doctor say about how your recovery would compare?
tauruslady	As for recovery his view was, without complications, daVinci patients would be ahead of abdominal surgery patients for the first 6 months and after that things were equal.
tauruslady	Since I would be having a total hysterectomy and BSO with lymph node sampling he figured my initial recovery would still be 6 to 8 weeks.
tauruslady	Some are lucky to have a 2 to 4 week initial recovery but I don't think he wanted to get my hopes up.
April Dawn	Vanessa, Tauruslady mentioned a concern about conversions. I understand that means starting out with a planned daVinci surgery— but then the surgeon has to change to abdominal surgery.
April Dawn	Could you provide any statistics on how often that happens?
dVH Vanessa	I'm about to show a graph. This experienced group of laparoscopic surgeons found they had a much lower percentage of conversions using dVS. In addition, the few times they did convert were for a much larger uterus than in the laparoscopic comparative arm of the study. We have many surgeons that find similar data in their practices.
LookingforaSis	How does this compare to how often a traditional laparoscopic surgery is converted to an abdominal surgery?

<p>fritzi64</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <h2 style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 15px 15px 0 0;">Conversions</h2> <p>Hysterectomy Benign Conversion Rate</p>  <table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Procedure</th> <th>Conversion Rate</th> <th>n</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>da Vinci</td> <td>4%</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lap</td> <td>9%</td> <td>100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">OR Time (LEFT) and Conversion rate (RIGHT); Payne TN, Dauterive F. A comparison of total laparoscopic hysterectomy to robotically assisted hysterectomy: surgical outcomes in a community practice. J Minim Invasive Gynecol. 2008 May-Jun; 15(3): 286-91.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small; margin-top: 10px;">INTUITIVE SURGICAL®</p> </div>	Procedure	Conversion Rate	n	da Vinci	4%	100	Lap	9%	100
Procedure	Conversion Rate	n								
da Vinci	4%	100								
Lap	9%	100								
<p>dVH Vanessa</p>	<p>Here's another graph. You can see how frequently women receiving laparoscopic surgery treatment had to be converted to an open procedure. Keep in mind that this conversion rate is different for each surgeon but should be something you ask about in a pre-surgical visit.</p>									
<p>dVH Vanessa</p>	<p>sorry, same graph as above</p>									
<p>fritzi64</p>	<p>((HysterSisters))), what questions do you have about who is and is not a candidate for a daVinci hysterectomy?</p>									
<p>fritzi64</p>	<p>Since it looks like there are no questions about that, let's continue.</p>									
<p>LookingforaSis</p>	<p>Vanessa, we've had quite a few members who have asked about being overweight and having a hysterectomy.</p>									
<p>dVH Vanessa</p>	<p>Overweight women may be eligible for dVS because the instruments are longer and they are held in place by the arms of the patient cart. Please note how the surgeons in this publication treated not only an overweight but also obese female population with fantastic clinical results. In fact there was no significant difference in the outcome compared to a thinner woman.</p>									
<p>LookingforaSis</p>	<p>Is this an issue with a daVinci procedure?</p>									

fritzi64

Overweight Woman

Overweight Cancer Hysterectomy



*P.A. Gehrig et al. What is the optimal minimally invasive surgical procedure for endometrial cancer staging in the obese and morbidly obese woman? Gynecologic Oncology, 111 (2008) 41-45.

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LookingforaSis

Vanessa, also we're asked about adhesions and whether laparoscopic procedures cause fewer adhesions

dVH Vanessa

Adhesions are typically caused by two factors – endometriosis or prior surgery (including Cesarean section). If you can reduce the size of a scar caused by surgery you are also reducing the possibility of future adhesions. In this manner, both conventional laparoscopy and da Vinci Surgery create smaller abdominal scars and therefore potential risk for adhesions.

April Dawn

Vanessa, what are some of the benefits of daVinci surgery as opposed to other hysterectomy options, especially for a woman with gynecological cancer?

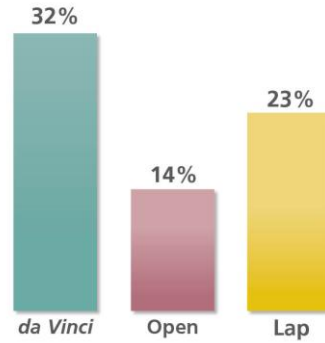
dVH Vanessa

Look at this chart. The most important part of any surgery is clinical efficacy, especially if you have cancer – in other words, you want the cancer to be removed. Due to the precision of the da Vinci instruments and the visualization far beyond a surgeon's own eyes (10x magnification), dV Surgery can potentially provide a clinically superior outcome while shortening recover and time to adjuvant therapy treatment.

fritzi64

Clinical outcomes - Cancer

Hysterectomy Lymph Node Retrieval



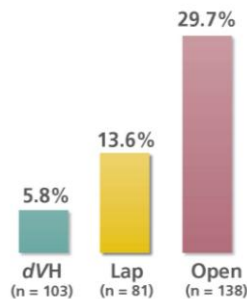
da Vinci Prostatectomy: Patel VR, et al. Robotic radical prostatectomy: outcomes of 500 cases. BJU Int. 2007 May;99(5):1109-12. Open prostatectomy: Scardino PT. Open radical retropubic prostatectomy. Presented at the American Urological Association's Carcinoma of the Prostate Course, San Francisco, CA, Sept. 30 - Oct. 1 2005. Lap prostatectomy: Touijer K, et al. Quality improvement in laparoscopic radical prostatectomy for pT2 prostate cancer: impact of video documentation review on positive surgical margin. J Urol. 2005 Mar;173(3):765-8. p. 766 da Vinci Hysterectomy: Boguess JF, et al. A comparative study of three surgical methods for hysterectomy with staging for endometrial cancer: robotic assistance, laparoscopy, laparotomy. Am Jnl of Obst & Gyn. Oct 2008; 360. e1-360e9

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fritzi64

Complications

Complication Rate in Hysterectomy for Endometrial Cancer



Major & minor complications in prostatectomy (LEFT): da Vinci: Bhandari A, et al. Perioperative complications of robotic radical prostatectomy after the learning curve. J Urol. 174, 915-918. Open: Brown, J.A., et al. Perioperative morbidity of laparoscopic radical prostatectomy compared with open radical retropubic prostatectomy. Urologic Oncology. 2004; 22, 102-106. Lap: Guillonneau B, et al. Perioperative complications of laparoscopic radical prostatectomy: the Montsouris 3-year experience. The Journal of Urology. 2002; 167, 51-56. In hysterectomy (RIGHT): Boguess JF, et al. A comparative study of three surgical methods for hysterectomy with staging for endometrial cancer: robotic assistance, laparoscopy, laparotomy. Am Jnl of Obst & Gyn. Oct 2008; 360. e1-360e9

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April Dawn

Tauruslady, did your second doctor explain any of this to you?

tauruslady

Yes, he told me that he and numerous other doctors felt the daVinci provided better visualization because of the magnification.

tauruslady

This puts the surgeon right there instead of several feet away when standing over a surgery table.

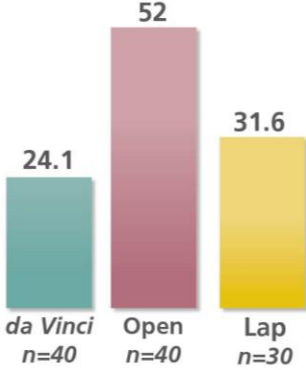
tauruslady

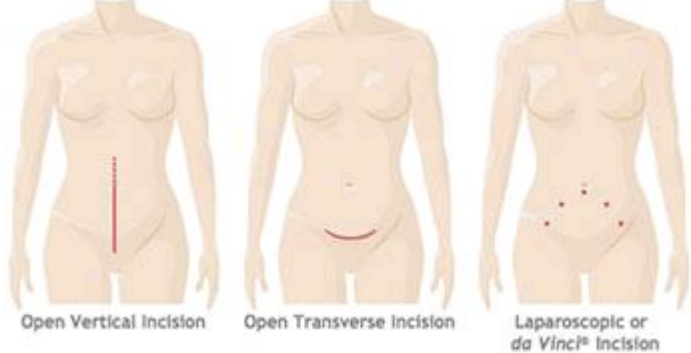
Also since it is a 3-D image it's better than a standard laparoscopy image.

tauruslady

He also said it created less fatigue for the surgeon because he was seated and not standing for hours

tauruslady	From an oncology perspective he said many oncologists felt that they could only tell if there were issues with lymph nodes by palpitating them.
tauruslady	This wasn't his personal viewpoint
LookingforaSis	Did you have any concerns about this procedure?
tauruslady	After talking to him really my concern wasn't about the surgery but was focused on dealing with impending surgical menopause issues and the impact on my overall health and sex life.
LookingforaSis	Were there any other medical concerns you had?
tauruslady	There appears to be a history of colon cancer in my family.
tauruslady	So after discussing this with my new doctor he recommended a colonoscopy, I was due for one anyway.
tauruslady	If cancer was found we would revert to an abdominal procedure.
tauruslady	My gastroenterologist was very accommodating when he heard what I was going through and we arranged a colonoscopy on Thursday November 20th.
tauruslady	Fortunately everything came back all clear so things moved ahead as scheduled.
LookingforaSis	So you faced a very unexpected diagnosis and surgery, did your research, got a second opinion, and arranged to have a daVinci procedure with a different doctor in less than 30 days.
tauruslady	Originally my surgery was going to be around 1pm on Monday but I got moved up to an early morning appointment.
tauruslady	I had to do a bowel prep, which was no fun because it was the 2nd one in a week. One for the hysterectomy and one for the colonoscopy.
tauruslady	Otherwise it was clear liquid diet and no food after midnight.
LookingforaSis	How did the surgery go?
tauruslady	My nerves were running high and thankfully my husband was able to be with me in the preparation room.
tauruslady	The hardest thing at that point was having the IV inserted because my veins roll and it always hurts.
tauruslady	I freaked when they told me I needed a second IV inserted as a backup port.
tauruslady	When they say my reaction they said they would insert it after I was anesthetized in the operating room.
tauruslady	They must have dropped the "twilight drugs" as I was being wheeled to the operating room.
tauruslady	Because all I remember is them saying "there's the daVinci machine" and "There's the console where the doctor will be sitting." to control the machine.
tauruslady	They had the daVinci machine draped in a surgical gown, I presume not to distress me.
tauruslady	They moved me to the surgical table and someone told me to move a little more to the right and the next thing I was starting to wake-up in post-op.
LookingforaSis	Were you in a lot of pain?
tauruslady	The worst post-op pain that I had while I was in the hospital was from my catheter air locking.
tauruslady	Otherwise I spent one night in the hospital and was released the next day.
tauruslady	They wanted the catheter removed and to know I was walking, able to urinate and passing some gas.
April Dawn	Vanessa, what do we know about women's surgery and recovery experiences compared to other types of hysterectomy?
dVH Vanessa	Simply put - Much faster (hours/days vs. weeks) and less pain (OTC pain pills vs. narcotics).

fritzi64	<h2 style="text-align: center; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px;">Return to normal activities</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">For women ... post-hysterectomy</p> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Return to Normal Activities (days)</h3>  <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Technique</th> <th>n</th> <th>Return to Normal Activities (days)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>da Vinci</td> <td>40</td> <td>24.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Open</td> <td>40</td> <td>52</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lap</td> <td>30</td> <td>31.6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">Bell MC, et al. Comparison of outcomes and cost for endometrial cancer staging via traditional laparotomy, standard laparoscopy and robotic techniques. Gynecol Oncol. 2008 Nov;111(3):407-11</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small;">INTUITIVE SURGICAL®</p>	Technique	n	Return to Normal Activities (days)	da Vinci	40	24.1	Open	40	52	Lap	30	31.6
Technique	n	Return to Normal Activities (days)											
da Vinci	40	24.1											
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April Dawn	Vanessa, are there any situations where a dVH is not the best option for someone?												
dVH Vanessa	Absolutely, as with any treatment option, there are times where you are not the ideal candidate. One such example: if you have advanced stage GYN cancer – you are not usually a surgical candidate. In order to find out if you happen to be one of these rare cases, check with your local dV surgeon.												
April Dawn	Vanessa, if this is so great, why are the other types of procedures still being done?												
dVH Vanessa	Long answer...ready. GYN applications were cleared in 2005 and so for the past 4 years, training has been available that is designed to allow GYNs to translate their surgical skills into the dVS environment. dVS is not for everyone. Virtually all OB/GYNs perform hysterectomies and do a few each month, many are not trained in minimally invasive techniques because they don't do enough volume to make it worth their time. There are over 1242 hospitals in the U.S. with dVS programs, and the systems are in demand												
dVH Vanessa	demand for urology, cardiac and general surgery procedures so it's a challenge for some GYN surgeons to get time on the da Vinci System at their institutions.												
fritzi64	I'm going to post a slide we have that shows incisions												

fritzi64	<p style="text-align: center;">Laparoscopic Surgery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimally invasive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ability to operate through small, keyhole incisions ▪ Better visualization than open surgery  <p style="text-align: center;">Open Vertical Incision Open Transverse Incision Laparoscopic or da Vinci[®] Incision</p>
tauruslady	You know my incisions aren't where these are. Could you explain why?
dVH Vanessa	These are baseline 'general' incisions and can vary depending upon the patients specific anatomy. My guess is you are not exactly the same as this pictoral woman and required a bit more variation.
April Dawn	Tauruslady, can you tell us how your recovery has gone?
tauruslady	My incisions healed perfectly, following doctor's orders prevented herniation.
tauruslady	The incision above my navel was very itchy for quite sometime.
tauruslady	I couldn't have anything rubbing against. So some clothes presented challenges.
tauruslady	My doctor told me this was normal, that's the incision where the laproscope is located and movement during surgeon can make it more sensitive during healing.
tauruslady	Once my doctor approved it, I started using scar "fading" crème. This was in January and by my 1st hysterversary they should be unnoticeable.
tauruslady	I had some bleeding 3 weeks post-op, it scared me but now I know it was normal and probably from a stitch dissolving.
tauruslady	My doctor gave me my initial pathology 2 days after surgery, so I could enjoy Thanksgiving.
tauruslady	All they found was complex hyperplasia with atypia. All pre-cancerous, no cancer spread anywhere.
tauruslady	My D&C had removed all the cancer, but just because it was found initially I still had to have the hysterectomy.
tauruslady	My first 2 post surgery oncology visits have gone well
tauruslady	My pap smears of the vaginal vault and internal exams (vaginal and rectal) have revealed no cancer.
tauruslady	I'll have quarterly visits for 1 to 2 years and probably drop to yearly but my doctor is confident that I'm cured.
tauruslady	The issues I experienced post surgery were / are issues I believe I would have had with any hysterectomy surgery.
tauruslady	I ended up being a slow healer so I was off work for 6 weeks, my first 2 weeks back I split part-time between home and the office.
tauruslady	I was delayed from intercourse for 10 weeks, had issues and was delayed to 2 more weeks
tauruslady	I was exhausted those first 2 weeks, around weeks 10 to 12 I started being able to put in 40 hours without the total exhaustion.

tauruslady	I had nerve pain in my upper thighs that, most probably, came from the pelvic lymph node dissections.
tauruslady	The nerves got irritated and are healing, its been constantly diminishing and is almost gone.
tauruslady	Surgical menopause hit the Friday after my surgery and it was rough.
tauruslady	Three days of headaches and intense hot flashes.
tauruslady	Due to the cancer diagnosis I couldn't take estrogen orally or in patches.
tauruslady	The sudden cancer diagnosis and surgery, along with the surgical menopause caused clinical depression.
tauruslady	My counselor put me on anti-depressants. We had to try several types and dosages.
tauruslady	Upside is they helped both the depression and the hot flashes.
tauruslady	Downside is they have slightly interfered with sexual response. However, surgical menopause contributed to that as well.
tauruslady	The resultant stress from everything, coupled with feelings of being a failure because I couldn't protect my own health, caused muscle pain.
tauruslady	My abdominal muscles were riddled with muscle triggers.
tauruslady	Due to the emotional distress, "why me", "I want to be normal". "I want to have things like they were before".
tauruslady	When I did get back to intimacy I couldn't relax and take things slowly.
tauruslady	This aggravated muscles and nerves that resulted in both external and internal vaginal pain.
tauruslady	The muscles would tense in anticipation of pain, there was pain and it became a vicious cycle.
tauruslady	This eventually landed me in the care of a uro-gynecologist who specializes in sexual dysfunction.
tauruslady	She prescribed pelvic floor physical therapy and rehabilitation.
tauruslady	I just completed that and for me the outcome was wonderful. No more pain!
tauruslady	I was also prescribed vaginal estrogen and just started testosterone.
tauruslady	My gynecological oncologist is totally on board with it since things were causing quality of life issues and my cancer was so early stage.
tauruslady	I had several yeast infections, a bacterial infection and a urinary tract infection but medications, probiotics and vaginal estrogen have gotten rid of those at this point.
April Dawn	Tauruslady, you took a scary diagnosis and were able to take charge of it a little bit. What do you hope others can learn from your story?
tauruslady	I continually tell people to explore options related to their surgery and recommend that they check into the daVinci procedure.
tauruslady	I feel blessed that I was a candidate for the surgery and that I found the information on it in it the nick of time.
tauruslady	I found wonderful support on the HysterSisters site.
tauruslady	So read threads and checkpoints. Post your questions and concerns. Let the wonderful women on the site support you with their experiences.
tauruslady	Procedures change, new research is done so make sure you and your doctor know what are new options.
tauruslady	Now some research is indicating in very early stage cancer there's a possibility the ovaries may not need to be removed.
tauruslady	If that all plays out over time maybe fewer women will encounter surgical menopause.
tauruslady	Also some research is indicating that radiation for early stage cancers is unnecessary. My doctor didn't have me do it.
tauruslady	Also HRT may not be entirely out depending on your cancer diagnosis.

tauruslady	Advocate for yourself. Find the right doctors who will listen to you and provide you support and direction.
tauruslady	For example, my gynecological oncologist didn't feel he was best to help with my pain issues.
tauruslady	However, he totally believed they were real and helped me find a doctor who could help me.
tauruslady	After your surgery if you end up needing physical therapy go for it. It helped me a lot and I never knew it was out there before my surgery.
tauruslady	Find your support system of family, friends, doctors and if it applies to you church community.
tauruslady	Things happened so fast and I got in to see doctors so quickly that I can only believe someone was watching out for me.
tauruslady	Don't think you don't have time to get a 2nd opinion, you have to feel comfortable with what's going on and understand the surgery.
tauruslady	[b]You can do it, remember for me total time from diagnosis to surgery was 21 days
LookingforaSis	Vanessa, let's say that someone who's here tonight wants to learn more about whether dVH is a good option for her. What should she do?
dVH Vanessa	On line you can visit www.daVinciHysterectomy.com ; we encourage women to get an opinion from a trained da Vinci surgeon – they can evaluate if you are a candidate for da Vinci Surgery.
LookingforaSis	What information and resources do you have on your dvh website?
dVH Vanessa	You can learn more about your GYN condition, possible treatment options, clinical publications related to dV Surgery, read or watch patient stories and even find a surgeon near you.
LookingforaSis	Tauruslady, what information and resources do we have on the HysterSisters website?
tauruslady	There are numerous things that can help you understand all your options or start you in the right direction.
tauruslady	If you aren't sure about what's out there or what you are scheduled for than you can post on forums to give you insight and direction.
tauruslady	Review the Pre-Op Checkpoints that give you definitions and information on all varieties of hysterectomies and preparation for them.
tauruslady	Of course there are links to the daVinci site from HysterSisters.
tauruslady	For the brave of heart you can watch videos of various surgeries
fritzi64	((HysterSisters)), what questions do you have?
fritzi64	I'm going to let through some of the questions queued up in moderation, but now is the time for questions for Vanessa and for taurus lady
fritzi64	Remember, if you have questions for our davinci rep, please remember that this is only for general information and you will not be given personal answers that could be considered medical advice
Windyaa	Are you advertising for the Da Vinci System?
fritzi64	We are not promoting any kind of hysterectomy—just as we don't promote any hysterectomy at all. It is important to HysterSisters.com that women are fully informed about all their options.
fritzi64	This includes being informed about options other than a hysterectomy, since this surgery comes with many risks regardless of what type it is.
fritzi64	However, even after a woman makes the decision, with her doctor, that a hysterectomy is the best option, there are still choices to be made.
fritzi64	Because the da Vinci procedure is new and not much information is available about the patient experience, we wanted to provide our members with an opportunity to learn more about it.
Kathy	and as Fritzi explained at the beginning of tonight, daVinci is our sponsor tonight

illinifan07	Do they normally remove the cervix with da vinci
dVH Vanessa	Removal of the cervix is a decision made by you and your surgeon and can be done in either an open, conventional laparoscopic or da Vinci procedure.
Windyaa	How can you trust a ROBOT to make holes in your body?
vicki2319	please explain is da vinci hysterectomy?
dVH Vanessa	The ROBOT doesn't make the holes. Your surgeon does. In fact the robot doesn't do anything without your surgeon controlling it. Think of it more as a master/slave relationship. This is not a robot like George Jetson...it has not brain or thinking capacity on it's own.
Windyaa	I don't want my dr mad at me for going to another dr for this da vinci, then he won't want you back again.
Windyaa	not all people have it done in 21 days, most have to wait months for an appointment for new patient exam and consultation.
tauruslady	In my opinion if your doctor gets mad at you for doing what's in your best interest
tauruslady	than maybe he's not the right doctor for you. Mine wasn't
Seaweed63	taurus lady - how soon after your surgery were you walking and they removed the cath?
tauruslady	I wish I had more than 21 days to research and plan; however that's all the time my ddoctor gave me
dVH Vanessa	Medicine is about providing the best option for any patient regardless!
April Dawn	A good doctor should encourage you to seek a second opinion and shouldn't be offended at all.
Windyaa	yes
tryingtodecide	How do the surgeons receive training on the daVinci procedure?
tauruslady	If I had followed original doctor's recommendation it would have been a TAH in 21 days.
tauruslady	Seaweed3 - I was walking that night.
tauruslady	Actually I was in my room by about 3pm and my late night nurse came in at 11pm and
tauruslady	was upset the evening nurse didn't have me walking
dVH Vanessa	The surgeons go through a very specific clinical pathway to learn how to utilize the da Vinci system. Including laboratory time, etc.
tauruslady	So we did a short stroll at 11:30
illinifan07	Does the davinci surgery just look at the female parts or everything around that area too?
tauruslady	The catheter came out next morning say around 9am
dVH Vanessa	Remember, the surgeon already knows how to do the surgery....they are just learning a new tool.
vicki2319	Vanessa ,how long is typical recovery?
dVH Vanessa	Can you explain that question more illinifan07?
tauruslady	illinifan07 - my surgeon looked around, I had incisions so they could look at lymph nodes bymy lunks
tauruslady	Also into my pelvic area
Seaweed63	My dr. said mid-July for me (saw her in late June) and it's not until Sept. 4 -- due to the fact she has to schedule the robot and only does surgery twice a week. But I understand.
dVH Vanessa	Hold on Vicki...let me answer first then I'll come back. The surgeon can view all of the pelvic area up to the kidneys. They just need to turn the camera around to view it.
tryingtodecide	I was delayed in order to get the daVinci and I am ok with it.
dVH Vanessa	Vicki - the recovery can vary depending upon how 'complex' your surgery is. Most of our patients say they go back to work within 2 weeks when it is for a non-cancerous condition.
Kathy	Vanessa, we are often asked how the surgeon can see better using the

	davinci equipment than standard lap or open surgery. Can you explain about the visual tools?
illinifan07	Sure, I have had chronic pain on my left side. I have had my fallopian tube removed and then three months later they did a laproscopic diagnostic surgery to see why I was still having pain. My doctor removed a mass and thought that should take care of the pain. Unfortunately I am still in pain and so my dr thinks that this is what we need to do.
dVH Vanessa	Sure....so, the camera on the da Vinci system has two 'eyes'. (just like your surgeon) This allows the da Vinci surgeon to operate in 3D, like he would in an open procedure. In a conventional laparoscopic procedure this is reduced to 2D.
dVH Vanessa	In addition...
Seaweed63	Thank you all so much for this forum tonight. It has given me great questions to ask and info. about the surgery and made me feel a lot better about it. Esp. thanks to tauruslady for sharing your story. I'm so glad you are healing and cancer is gone. God bless!!
BJNC	Besides the vaginal cuff, are there stitches inside?
dVH Vanessa	The camera can magnify just like your regular camera at home....so, you can magnify up to 10x's and see small body parts...really big! Obviously this helps the surgeon to see what he/she is operating on better.
LadyTeal	My Doctor who did'nt do Davinci, watched my surgery as she was very interested.
dVH Vanessa	No stitches are placed besides from the vaginal cuff.
fritzi64	I'm going to bring back some of the questions you all posted earlier.
fritzi64	How does it work - does the machine go in there and break everything up and then remove everything via the tiny incisions?
fritzi64	What's the difference between daVinci and TLH?
fritzi64	and a comment: I briefly discussed a regular hysto, but no way did I want that. I had a fibroid removed in 12/05 and they had to cut me 4" across and I hated it. I heard about davinci and the shorter recovery time and said that's it for me. No other options even interested me.
vicki2319	I have a family that depends on me? howmuch work is possible post op?
dVH Vanessa	So, when you do a hysterectomy you detach the uterus and other potential parts (tubes and ovaries) from the pelvic wall. You then create an incision on the vagina and essentially 'deliver' the uterus out as you would a baby. So, everything is extracted in one big piece.
LadyTeal	I had my surgery on Tues. morn, went home weds afternoon, was out shopping and doing lunch with daughters on Friday.
Windyaa	what if the da vinci misses some cancer cells in there?
tauruslady	The surgeon is viewing and reviewing everything, it's not the daVinci it's your doctor.
BaileyToo	How much blood loss is usual with Dvh? Is is recommended to put aside a unit of yor own blood prior to surgery?
dVH Vanessa	The difference between da Vinci and TLH. It is the same procedure with a different tool. With the da Vinci you are using more precise instruments that have wrists - a conventional TLH uses instruments without any movement at the end...it is similar to one of those infomercials to pick up things on the ground without bending over. Plus the camera benefits.
tauruslady	My doctor did the standard oncological pelvic washings and lymph node sampling to determine if the cancer had spread.
dVH Vanessa	The da Vinci doesn't miss cancer cells because it takes out what the surgeon directs it to take out. Please remember in any cancer procedure that the cancerous cells are hard to 'see' and that is why

	continuous testing is so important.									
tauruslady	Since he or she has 10x magnification and can move around and see what he wants to check out, in my opinion, he or she has less chance of missing something									
fritzi64	<div style="text-align: center;"> <h2 style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; border-radius: 10px 10px 0 0;">Blood Loss</h2> <p>Benign Hysterectomy</p> <p>Intraoperative Blood Loss (mL)</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Procedure</th> <th>Intraoperative Blood Loss (mL)</th> <th>Sample Size (n)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>da Vinci</td> <td>61</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lap</td> <td>113</td> <td>100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><small>LEFT: Payne TN, Dauterive F. A comparison of total laparoscopic hysterectomy to robotically assisted hysterectomy: surgical outcomes in a community practice. J Minim Invasive Gynecol. 2008 May-Jun; 15(3): 286-91. RIGHT: Poston RS, et al. Comparison of economic and patient outcomes with minimally invasive versus traditional off-pump coronary artery bypass grafting techniques. Ann Surg. 2008</small></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><small>INTUITIVE SURGICAL®</small></p> </div>	Procedure	Intraoperative Blood Loss (mL)	Sample Size (n)	da Vinci	61	100	Lap	113	100
Procedure	Intraoperative Blood Loss (mL)	Sample Size (n)								
da Vinci	61	100								
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vicki2319	Vanessa, is there help for non insured people?									
dVH Vanessa	It is always good to have a supply of your own blood. With the da Vinci procedures, our surgeons usually lose less than 100 cc/ml of blood regardless of the case. This is a VERY small amount.									
vicki2319	does race play apart in your chart?									
fritzi64	I don't recall which chart Vicki was referring to, Vanessa, but has there been research done on the role of race in the success with the daVinci system?									
dVH Vanessa	Vicki - many hospitals have policies about treating all comers to their facilities - so that is very site specific.									
vicki2319	is death possible with dvh? I know all surgeries have side effects any stats.?									
dVH Vanessa	There is no racial difference between patient populations on outcomes - at all! The only difference in race is usually what causes the patient to seek a hysterectomy. For example, African American women are more likely to have uterine fibroids.									
dVH Vanessa	Death is no more possible with dvh than with any other type of surgery.									
Windyaa	Does anyone but me think this is way to new a procedure to be using a robot on your organs?									
BJNC	Why do they switch to open hyst. for adhesions? I thought da vinci could "see and correct things better than an open hyst. AND aren't adhesions fairly normal? Many of us have had c-sections.									
dVH Vanessa	The procedure itself is not new...remember it is just a new tool that has been approved for almost 5 years in GYN procedures.									
tryingtodecide	Is abdominal swelling as much an issue with the daVinci procedure?									
Kathy	Windyaa, I think it would help you to read about this procedure. The robot is not doing the surgery. It is a piece of equipment just like lap tools. The surgeon does the surgery. SEeing a video is helpful to									

	understanding thig.
Kathy	this
dVH Vanessa	They to not always switch to open for adhesions...in fact that is less likely with the da Vinci tool than with regular conventional laparoscopy.
LadyTeal	Windy, The doctor is doing your surgery, Da Vinci is only his tool.
tauruslady	Windyaa - the procedure has been around for quiet some time and it's been used for 5 year in GYN procedures. I watched procedures done at University of North Carolina and they are considered very reputable
illinifan07	Is it best to have a colonoscopy before this surgery if a patient is experiencing pain on the left side that isn't going away?
dVH Vanessa	Swelling can occur after any surgery. However, the da Vinci system was designed to specifically minimize body wall trauma - therefore reducing potential for swelling after the fact.
fritzi64	We'll be closing the chat room in about ten minutes.
fritzi64	I'm trying to let questions through for Vanessa and tauruslady to respond to,
LookingforaSis	illin, perhaps seeking an opinion from a gastroenterologist would help.
April Dawn	illinifan, I think it's important to rule out possible causes of pain before consenting to having a hysterectomy.
dVH Vanessa	Illinifan - pain is very difficult as it can be specific or referred. I would suggest seeking a pain specialist as taurus did to pinpoint the root cause of it!
fritzi64	but if yours doesn't come through, it's just because we're low on time.
tauruslady	Illinifan - I think the colonoscopy procedure would be good to check with your doctor. I had one because of my family background
mycookiebaker	if you have had c-sections are you still a candidate for the davinci procedure
dVH Vanessa	Absolutely!
fritzi64	Please continue to submit your questions, though, while we have Vanessa and tauruslady here with us.
mycookiebaker	great i will ask my ob/gyn at tomorrows appt
dVH Vanessa	In fact, the camera and wrists on the instruments make adhesions EASIER to take down with the da Vinci.
LadyTeal	MyCookiebaker, I had 2 c-sections..
illinifan07	my gastroenterologist said the only thing on my left besides my female parts is my colon and what I was describing had nothing to do with my colon. He agreed with my gyno
fritzi64	Vanessa, we've had some questions about whether women with endometriosis are good candidates for a da Vinci procedure.
fritzi64	What do we know about this?
fritzi64	And I'm going to let several questions through at once.
mycookiebaker	do any ob/gyn do the davinci procedure or is there a certain specialist i need to go to
BaileyToo	If you had a DIEP breast reconstuction are you still a candidate for the davinci?
dVH Vanessa	Endometriosis is a very difficult condition that typical tends to repeat many times in a woman's life. The 'trick' with endometriosis is seeing the specific cells you want to take out. With the da Vinci camera the surgeon can see the cells better and get close up to them in order to resect them. I would suggest going to a surgeon who sees a lot of endometriosis patients so they know what to 'look' for.
dVH Vanessa	BAiley - yes. Prior surgery (any surgery) is not a contraindication.
tauruslady	Any doctor can be trained in the daVinci procedure. I know both gynecological oncologists and an ob that is trained the procedure.
dVH Vanessa	My cookie - not all Ob/Gyns offer the da Vinci procedure. make sure to

	check the da Vinci surgeon locator on this site: www.davincihysterectomy.com to find a surgeon in your area for an opion.
fritzi64	That is all the time we have for this evening.
fritzi64	It is important that everyone do her research.
fritzi64	Look at our videos.
fritzi64	Post and read in the forums.
fritzi64	Learn about the risks of a hysterectomy....
fritzi64so when you talk with your doctor, you are sure you are making the right decision for YOU.
fritzi64	Thank you, Vanessa, for visiting us here at HysterSisters to provide us with information.
fritzi64	Tauruslady, thank you for opening up your life to share your experiences with everyone tonight who is facing a hysterectomy.
fritzi64	April Dawn and LookingforaSis, thank you for conducting the interview.
April Dawn	You're very welcome. :)
fritzi64	((((HysterSisters))), thank you all for being here, for caring enough about yourselves to make the effort to learn just a bit more about your options.
dVH Vanessa	My pleasure!
vicki2319	thank you
IamGeeky	Thank you Vanessa and tauruslady!!
tauruslady	You are most welcome. I hoped my experiences have helped others.
illinifan07	Thanks so much! I have learned a lot and have some questions for my doctor
fritzi64	And now, dear (((HysterSisters))), the room must close.
tauruslady	Good night everyone thanks for coming

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