

A Roundtable Discussion: Exploring Hysterectomy Options

A da Vinci® Patient's Story




October 1, 2009

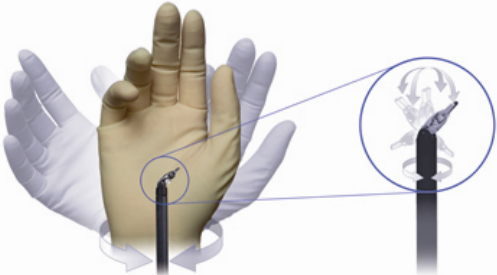
fritzi64	Hi limolady!
tauruslady	Hi Limolady
limolady	hi all
limolady	hows everyone this fine day
fritzi64	I'm fine. How are you doing?
limolady	Doing ok thanks
limolady	and you?
fritzi64	When is your surgery?
fritzi64	Hi Inor
LookingforaSis	Hi Inor!
cmtsp	Hi Inor
limolady	already had just wanted to check out the discussion is that ok
limolady	hi Inor
Inor	well hello friendly room!
tauruslady	Most definitely, all are welcome :0
tauruslady	:)
fritzi64	While we're waiting for a few more folks to show up, feel free to chat.
LookingforaSis	Inor, when was your op?
limolady	thanks:) :)
fritzi64	I thought you'd already had your surgery, limo!
LookingforaSis	is, sorry.
fritzi64	Hi smitty89
limolady	Had TAH on June 15th
LookingforaSis	Hi Smitty
cmtsp	Hi smitty89
smitty89	hello everyone!
tauruslady	Hi Smitty89
Inor	Have not had yet. Appoint. w/surgeon Oct 6
tauruslady	Hi slwiso7
fritzi64	Hi slwilso7
cmtsp	Hi slwilso7
LookingforaSis	Inor, that's soon. glad you could make it tonight.
limolady	fitz i did
fritzi64	We'll wait a few minutes to get started, since it can take some time to figure out how to get here and get settled in
Inor	TY just seeing surgeon. Will be double surgery w/gyno & gen. surgeon somewhere down the road
tauruslady	Slwilso7 when is your surgery
fritzi64	How is everyone's weather today?
cmtsp	Cold, windy, and rainy
limolady	same here in chicago
tauruslady	Ours is turning back into rain, cold
fritzi64	We're cool, windy, and just headed toward rainy
LookingforaSis	Fritzi, we had wonderful weather, minus a crazy wind!
fritzi64	I'm in the Milwaukee area
fritzi64	I like rainy weather in October.
tauruslady	Hi hg2350

fritzi64	Hi hg2350
limolady	lol
cmtsp	You get our leftovers, Fritzi
LookingforaSis	We can't just get rain here... We get BIG HUGE hail.
tauruslady	Hi ShanonH
limolady	oh no look
fritzi64	Hi ShannonH
limolady	hi shannon
LookingforaSis	Hi HG
limolady	hi gh
LookingforaSis	Hi Shannon
ShannonH	Thanks, so glad to be here
slwilso7	No surg sched as of yet, looking at all options. Oh and it was a lovely day down here in Florida.
fritzi64	We're glad to have you here tonight.
smitty89	I was so glad this is being offered tonight. I have an appt to talk to my dr about the da Vinci procedure on Monday!
tauruslady	We're glad you could make it, always makes it nic
tauruslady	nice
fritzi64	Excellent timing, smitty!
fritzi64	Hi jbarnet4
tauruslady	Hi jbarnet4
LookingforaSis	Hi JB
limolady	hi jbarnet
smitty89	Yes very good timing!
ShannonH	Hi hg
fritzi64	We'll get started in two more minutes, since it looks like we have a couple more folks trying to get in the door.
cmtsp	hg2350 keeps getting the boot
fritzi64	I'm not sure what the trouble is :(
cmtsp	There she is!
limolady	wb
fritzi64	Hi pagan73
tauruslady	Hi pagan73
fritzi64	Okay, let's go ahead and get started, everyone!
pagan73	Hello
LookingforaSis	Hi pagan!
fritzi64	Welcome to our Roundtable tonight!
fritzi64	We are so glad you are here.
pagan73	hello thank you for the warm welcome
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	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	Tonight you are going to hear from a HysterSisters member who needed a hysterectomy.
fritzi64	She was mentally preparing for one kind of surgery.
fritzi64	However, the week before her surgery, her doctor informed her that she might be a candidate for a da Vinci hysterectomy.
fritzi64	Tonight's Roundtable discussion surrounds the topic of da Vinci Hysterectomy as a hysterectomy option.

fritzi64	We have a da Vinci representative in the discussion with us tonight.
fritzi64	And da Vinci is our sponsor tonight.
fritzi64	If you have questions for our da Vinci rep, please remember that this is only for general information and you will not be given personal answers that could be considered medical advice
fritzi64	Hi redblue!
limolady	ty da vinci
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
redblue	Hi - thanks for arranging this.
fritzi64	Because da Vinci is still relatively new and is something our doctors may not have experience with, we wanted to provide you with a bit more insight.
redblue	Is there audio?
fritzi64	Here's how tonight's Roundtable will work:
fritzi64	No, it's a text-based chat.
fritzi64	Two of our HysterSisters hostesses, April Dawn and LookingforaSis, will be interviewing lumpygus, a HysterSisters member who has had the da Vinci hysterectomy procedure and will share her experiences.
hg2350	Hi Hg2350 doing the davinci on nov 6th
fritzi64	We also have JC, a representative from da Vinci surgery, who will be able to share some important statistics and other information about the surgery.
fritzi64	I'm glad you made it, redblue, and hg2350
fritzi64	And I will be stepping in on occasion to ask the audience a few questions.
hg2350	very interested
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	The moderation is now on.
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	Lumpygus, please tell us a little about yourself.
lumpygus	Hi everyone!
lumpygus	I'm a 46 year old homemaker who lives in a suburb of Philadelphia...Go Phillies!
lumpygus	My husband and I will be celebrating our 14th wedding anniversary next week.
lumpygus	I have a 12 year old daughter and a 9 year old daughter.
lumpygus	My 84 year old mother lives with us and we have a 3 year old English Bulldog named Oakie.
lumpygus	My hobbies are tap dancing, bowling, golf and playing bridge.
April Dawn	JC, would you please tell us about yourself and your relationship with da Vinci?
dVs Rep JC	I work in the marketing dept at Intuitive Surgical® and I help educate surgeons on using this advanced technology.**
fritzi64	(((HysterSisters))) members, can you share with us one

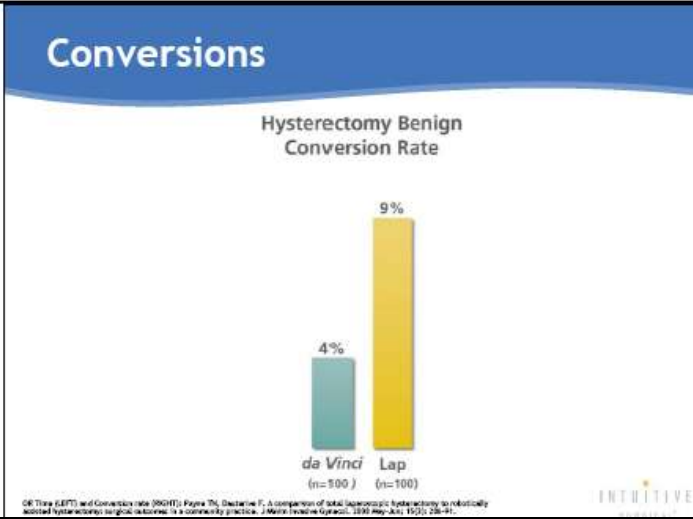
	question that you hope to have answered during our time together this evening?
fritzi64	Remember, (((HysterSisters))) means that we are asking those of you in attendance to share with us.
fritzi64	We will be getting to your questions a bit later, but I'll post them now so you can be thinking about them.
smitty89	How long does it take after the surgery to get back to work in an office, light lifting, environment?
cmtsp	Some members have posted that the dV is not covered by their insurance. Is this changing?
hg2350	HG2350 doc said more time on table 3 to 4 hrs but less recovery time
redblue	How long has this method been available and how trained our the surgeons - what process do they go through
ShannonH	What is the suggested amount of time before you should begin lifiting anything heavy?
fritzi64	We'll have just a couple more questions to come through and then we'll move forward.
pagan73	my doctor says i need a hyster and it can be done lapr. but I may have to much scar tissues from previous surgs
jbarnet4	How to find out if you're a candidiate and how to eevaluate surgeons to find a good one
ShannonH	Can you give an approximate amount of time the surgery takes for a total hysterectomy without any other complications?
fritzi64	Thank you for sharing that.
fritzi64	As you'll see on our agenda (scroll down below the chat window), you should find the answers to a lot of these questions here tonight.
slwilso7	How can I find out which (doctors) are trained in my area to perform this procedure?
LookingforaSis	Lumpygus, what brought you to the hysterectomy experience?
lumpygus	I had fibroids and I had very heavy periods.
lumpygus	I had a myomectomy 13 years ago and it got rid of my first batch of fibroids and enabled me to have children.
lumpygus	When I had my first discussion with my gynecologist as to what type of hysterectomy I was going to have he told me I needed an abdominal one.
lumpygus	My goal was for me to avoid another abdominal surgery.
lumpygus	I had a myomectomy 13 years ago and a c-section 12 years ago and I just really, really wanted to avoid having another long recovery time.
lumpygus	After putting off having the hysterectomy for a year, I decided to see a specialist.
lumpygus	Much to my surprise, he said that he was pretty confident that I could have a LSH.
lumpygus	Our game plan was for me to have 3 months of Lupron injections prior to the surgery to help shrink the fibroids and make them more pliable which would increase my chances of the LSH.
lumpygus	I started on the Lupron in May and had mild side effects, thankfully. Short episodes of hot flashes that left me as fast as they came, some weight gain and bloating, and some aches and pains in my joints.
lumpygus	The best side effect was that my heavy periods had ceased and even though I did get my period, it was short lasting and very light.**

LookingforaSis	So you were concerned that your fibroids were too big and you would have to have an abdominal surgery, which would lead to a more difficult recovery.
LookingforaSis	Let's talk about surgery types. Lumpygus was hoping for a laparoscopic surgery. JC, would it be fair to say da Vinci Surgery is the next generation of laparoscopic surgery?
dVs Rep JC	With the enhanced vision of the da Vinci, a surgeon has a direct view deep into the pelvis seeing more of the fibroid and how it's attached to other structures. This enhances the surgeon's ability to precisely isolate the fibroid without removing viable uterine tissue.
fritzi64	Sometimes the chatroom lags for a moment. We appreciate your patience.
dVs Rep JC	We believe da Vinci surgery
dVs Rep JC	is the best combination of vision,
dVs Rep JC	precision, and control which allows surgeons
dVs Rep JC	to replicate open surgery techniques
dVs Rep JC	in a minimally invasive environment**
April Dawn	Could you explain how the da Vinci Surgical System works?
dVs Rep JC	The da Vinci System has three main parts—a surgeon console, patient side cart and vision system.
fritzi64	
dVs Rep JC	The surgeon console is where the physician can see inside the body with a camera.
fritzi64	
dVs Rep JC	That camera provides 3D HD vision with 10x magnification vision and "intuitively" manipulates the instruments with precision and is under his or her complete control.
fritzi64	
dVs Rep JC	The patient side cart (sometimes referred to as the "robot") consists of 4 "arms" that hold the camera, and up to three multi-functional instruments that respond to the surgeon's precise manipulations.

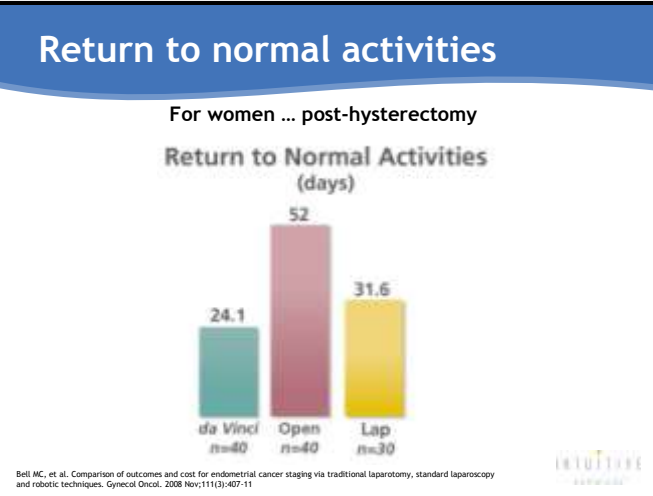
fritzi64	
dVs Rep JC	Lastly, there is a vision system that processes the 3D image and projects it to both the surgeon and the rest of the staff in the OR suite. That gives everyone a view of what's happening inside this minimally invasive environment.**
LookingforaSis	What does it mean that there is a "robot" involved?
dVs Rep JC	Unfortunately, the traditional definition of "robot" implies that the system is programmed to run automatically. As you can see from the photos above (and videos if you've viewed them prior to this event), every instrument is under the complete control of the surgeon at all times.
dVs Rep JC	It's like driving your car - it only responds to your physical commands. Patient safety is our first priority, and the "robot" is completely incapable of doing anything on its own without the surgeon directing it. Robotic technology does afford the surgeon distinct advantages such as ultra-precise movement, 3D vision and magnification, and miniaturization of the instruments.**
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?
fritzi64	While you're submitting these responses, I'm going to post your other questions from before so JC can be thinking about them.
ShannonH	If I can ask another question. What are the possible complications specific to da vinci?
glacier	Is this procedure new to Illinois?
glacier	I am scheduled for a lap hysterectomy on 10/5 and my dr said that the recovery should be similiar to the da vinci and she did not feel that I needed that. I want to know if that is true?? She felt that she would be able to easily do it the lap way. I also want to know if it is better to keep the cervix.
slwilso7	Do the size and or number of fibrroids limit surgery options?
hg2350	hg2350 What if you have a blockage and gyno cannot do a D& C and has recommended oncologist gyno
smitty89	I am meeting with my doctor on Monday to discuss the da Vinci procedure!
pagan73	a balloon inserted w warm water to to destroy the loining, an IUD and a lapr hystr
ShannonH	My gyn said she could only do an abdomincal because of my uterus, but referred me to a gyn/onco to see if I was a candidate for da vinci
limolady	are you put to sleep having the de vinci
ShannonH	I'm scheduled for Oct 19th
LookingforaSis	JC, what are some of the benefits of da Vinci Surgery as opposed to other hysterectomy options, especially for a woman with fibroids?

dVs Rep JC	With the enhanced vision of the da Vinci, a surgeon has a direct view deep into the pelvis seeing more of the fibroid and how it's attached to other structures. This enhances the surgeon's ability to precisely isolate the fibroid without removing viable uterine tissue.
dVs Rep JC	After removing certain types of fibroids, the surgeon frequently needs to stitch back together different muscle layers of the uterus. With the da Vinci instruments, this is easier and more precise than with laparoscopy.
fritzi64	((HysterSisters))), how many of you have sought a second opinion?
dVs Rep JC	Finally, since most fibroids are still removed with a large abdominal incision, patients now have a minimally invasive option for this procedure that previously was not widely available.**
pagan73	going monday for a second
smitty89	No second opinion here.
fritzi64	We know from a voluntary poll on Hystersisters that fewer than half our members have gotten a second opinion.
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.
April Dawn	Lumpygus, you were hoping for a traditional laparoscopic surgery but expected an abdominal surgery. Why did you think about a da Vinci surgery?
lumpygus	At my pre-op appt. before the surgery my doctor gave me a uterine ultrasound and much to my surprise told me that I would be a candidate for the DaVinci since the fibroids (even though they hadn't shrunk much) were more pliable than they were before the Lupron injections.
lumpygus	He said a person only has so much room in their pelvis and so being able to get the equipment inside through the small incisions and being able to maneuver around is important with this type of procedure.
lumpygus	**
April Dawn	JC, how does fibroid size affect whether a woman is a candidate for a da Vinci Hysterectomy?
dVs Rep JC	Yes - the larger the fibroid, the more difficult it is to treat minimally invasively. However, da Vinci Surgery allows the surgeon to treat more and larger fibroids minimally invasively than does traditional laparoscopy.**
LookingforaSis	Lumpygus, how did you prepare yourself for the surgery?
lumpygus	This website was a Godsend to me!
lumpygus	I had previously been reading all the posts regarding SAH's and LHS's to better prepare myself for what to expect, not paying much attention to the DaVinci information.

lumpygus	But all of a sudden, less than a week before my surgery, I needed to start reading up on the DaVinci.
lumpygus	I'm glad I went into their website to take a look at the actual equipment because it looked pretty overwhelming in the picture and at least I was prepared going into the operating room.
lumpygus	Although I'm very nearsighted, lol, and when they took off my glasses and wheeled me into the O.R. I couldn't see very much anyway.**
LookingforaSis	How did your surgery go?
lumpygus	The hospital I had the surgery in had recently acquired the DaVinci in June an my surgery was their first hysterectomy at that particular hospital.
lumpygus	My surgeon had performed DaVinci hysterectomies at another hospital and so I was grateful he had previous experience using the equipment.
lumpygus	Since the robotics was new to the hospital, they warned me that there would be quite a few people in the operating room during my surgery but that the only part of my body being exposed was my stomach.
lumpygus	The sales rep. for the equipment was there and two observers plus extra hospital staff that needed to be there to observe, I guess, for training purposes.
lumpygus	I was their very first hysterectomy with the DaVinci.**
LookingforaSis	How was your initial recovery in the hospital?
lumpygus	I felt very relieved and grateful that I was able to have not only a laprascopic hysterectomy vs. the abdominal type, but that they were able to do it using the DaVinci system.
lumpygus	I was quite sore from the procedure. (Felt like I had done too many sit-ups) but Motrin and Extra Strength Tylenol helped me handle the pain. I didn't need any strong narcotics after the surgery.
lumpygus	My soreness was mostly on my right side where my largest incision was. There was a total of 5 incisions, the two largest, one on my right side and the other about an inch above my belly button. The other 3 were small.
lumpygus	The surgeon told me that the incisions would be no bigger than a half inch and that I'd have 5 in all. I had surgical glue, with no steristrips.
lumpygus	Other than the short worry about urinating, I pretty much had a peaceful night's sleep in the hospital.
lumpygus	I remember the nurse telling me how amazed she was that I didn't need pain medication
lumpygus	The woman down the hall just had an abdominal hysterectomy and she was on a pain pump.
lumpygus	Moving in and out of the bed was my biggest challenge.
lumpygus	And I remembered from my previous surgeries that my heels and elbows come in very handy when you cannot use your stomach muscles.
lumpygus	After a couple of days, my pain was mostly body aches all over, not just in my stomach area. My neck muscles were sore as well as my arm muscles and naturally my stomach muscles.
lumpygus	The neck muscles I think were due to trying to get in and out of the hospital bed but my guess is that it also could have been the way they had my body laying while they operated on me.
lumpygus	My surgery took 4 hours so I was in an inverted position with my hips at a higher level than my head for a long time, which is

	what I'm attributing my neck soreness to.									
lumpygus	Another thing they told me was that they needed to strap my arms down underneath me because of the way I had to lie on the table and that might be why my arms were sore.									
lumpygus	The surgeon told my husband that my surgery should take about 3 hours and so I'm not quite sure why it took 4 hours and my husband said he started to worry a bit after the 3 hours were up.**									
April Dawn	JC, Some of our members have asked about conversions. I understand that means starting out with a planned da Vinci Surgery but then the surgeon has to change to abdominal surgery.									
dVs Rep JC	Here is clinical data that illustrates the experience of a lap surgeon who found a much lower percentage of conversions using da Vinci Surgery relative to traditional laparoscopy.									
fritzi64	 <p>Conversions</p> <p>Hysterectomy Benign Conversion Rate</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Group</th> <th>Conversion Rate</th> <th>n</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>da Vinci</td> <td>4%</td> <td>500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lap</td> <td>9%</td> <td>100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><small>OR Title (LEFT) and Conversion rate (RIGHT): Payne TN, Ducklow F. A comparison of total laparoscopic hysterectomy to robotically assisted hysterectomy surgical outcomes in a community practice. J Minim Invasive Gynecol. 1999 May-Jun; 12(2): 256-61.</small></p> <p><small>INTUITIVE</small></p>	Group	Conversion Rate	n	da Vinci	4%	500	Lap	9%	100
Group	Conversion Rate	n								
da Vinci	4%	500								
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dVs Rep JC	Conversions typically happen because the uterus is quite large or the patient has had prior pelvic surgery. It's interesting to note that when these surgeons converted during a da Vinci procedure it was because the uterus was much larger than in the laparoscopic comparative arm of the study.**									
LookingforaSis	JC, lumpygus said that she was in surgery for several hours. Does a da Vinci Hysterectomy take longer than a hysterectomy that is done abdominally, laparoscopically, or vaginally?									
dVs Rep JC	Some hysterectomies can take as little as ½ hour; however if a large and/or multiple fibroids are involved then surgical times of 3-4 hours are possible.									
dVs Rep JC	There are a number of studies looking at operative times, though its very surgeon and patient dependent. It is safe to say that with experience, a da Vinci case can be just as fast, if not faster than a laparoscopic case, and has been shown to be quicker than abdominal surgery in a number of studies.**									
April Dawn	JC, are there any situations where robotic surgery is not the best option for someone?									
dVs Rep JC	Each patient situation is different and surgeons carefully evaluate every aspect before making recommendations. dVS allows surgeons to consider and possibly offer minimally invasive surgery to a broader range of patients, including patients with more complex medical conditions than they have in the past.**									
LookingforaSis	If this is such a great option, why are the other types of									

	procedures still being done?
dVs Rep JC	da Vinci Surgery was approved by the FDA for GYN applications in 2005 and we've spent the past 4 years training GYNs to translate their surgical skills into the dVS minimally invasive environment. While virtually all OB/GYNs perform hysterectomies, many are not trained in minimally invasive techniques because they don't do enough surgeries to make it worth their time.
dVs Rep JC	There are hundreds of hospitals in the US with dVS programs, but not every GYN has access to a system or is even aware of the technology at this point. We're changing that every day, but it takes time to adopt a new technology into our healthcare system.**
April Dawn	Lumpygus, can you tell us how your recovery has gone?
lumpygus	My supracervical hysterectomy was performed on July 29th, so I've just completed 8 weeks of healing.
lumpygus	It was amazing how when I hit the 5th week post op mark (and it seemed to be the same for other women in my recovery group on Hystersisters) it was like I turned a corner
lumpygus	and didn't feel as though I had to be worried about how I moved my body getting in or out of bed, or sitting in a chair, or getting in and out of the car.
lumpygus	It was encouraging to know that I was quickly becoming my old self again.
lumpygus	I had issues with 2 of my larger incisions weeping, which was a concern for me in the beginning.
lumpygus	I paid my doctor a visit a week sooner than my previously scheduled 2 week post op appointment and he assured me that the incisions were fine
lumpygus	and that what I should do was place warm compresses on them for 20 minutes, three times a day.
lumpygus	This brings the blood to the surrounding tissues and helps in the healing.
lumpygus	I did this for about a week and sure enough, the scabs stopped opening up after my showers or after doing light physical activities.
lumpygus	I noticed on the Hystersisters site that only a couple of women had this issue to deal with during their recovery.
lumpygus	So I assume, it doesn't happen to everyone and in my case, the 2 largest incisions were the ones needing attending to, not all 5 of them.
lumpygus	My uterus had measured at 5 months if I was pregnant, and so the one incision was higher than my belly button. That was in an awkward spot when I bent over which didn't help the healing.
lumpygus	I was surprised that at my 2 week post op appointment the surgeon totally discharged me from his care.
lumpygus	He said that I was able to resume all my presurgery activities which was a total shock to me.
lumpygus	Knowing how my body recuperates since having previous surgeries, I took it easy for another 2 weeks and only allowed myself to drive and lift very light grocery bags and objects.
lumpygus	My goal was to have a shorter recovery time, and boy did I!
lumpygus	I did not go back to the gym or resume my dance classes or bowling activities until about the 6th week post op mark and that was just a decision I made.
lumpygus	When I asked the surgeon why I was being cleared so quickly

	into my recovery at only the 2 week post op mark, he said that it was because I kept my cervix.												
lumpygus	A supracervical hysterectomy has a much quicker recovery time, especially due to the fact that it was done the DaVinci way.												
lumpygus	Like I said, I'm 8 weeks post op now and for me, life has returned to normal, with the added bonus of not having to deal with extremely heavy periods every month! **												
LookingforaSis	JC, What are the best questions to ask a doctor about recovery care specific to the robotic surgery?												
dVs Rep JC	Often we hear from dVS surgeons that patients feel better sooner then expected and sometimes that makes them forget they had surgery. The body needs time to heal so it is important to follow your surgeon's instructions about your post-op activities. Be sure to ask how long it is likely to take until you'll be back to work, back to athletic activities, how long until you can resume intercourse, etc.**												
fritzi64	 <p>Return to normal activities</p> <p>For women ... post-hysterectomy</p> <p>Return to Normal Activities (days)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Procedure</th> <th>n</th> <th>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><small>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</small></p>	Procedure	n	Days	da Vinci	40	24.1	Open	40	52	Lap	30	31.6
Procedure	n	Days											
da Vinci	40	24.1											
Open	40	52											
Lap	30	31.6											
April Dawn	Lumpygus, it sounds like you put off a hysterectomy for a while. Then you took Lupron in an effort to provide yourself with the best possible outcome for your surgery. What do you hope others can learn from your story? Lumpygus, it sounds like you put off a hysterectomy for a while. Then you took Lupron in an effort to provide yourself with the best possible outcome for your surgery. What do you hope others can learn from your story?												
lumpygus	The only advice I can give women out there who are facing the same decisions as I did, is to ask tons of questions, don't take one person's advice as gospel.												
lumpygus	Seek a specialist if you can. My GYN would have performed a SAH if I had agreed to it a year ago, and I'm so thankful that I didn't!												
lumpygus	I can't say enough about how great this website is and how thankful I am that I found it.												
lumpygus	I especially appreciate the posts regarding what to bring to the hospital and what you'll need for your recovery.**												
LookingforaSis	JC, 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?												
dVs Rep JC	on line you can visit www.daVinciHysterectomy.com or www.daVinciStories.com ; we encourage women to get an opinion (1st, 2nd, 3rd) from a trained da Vinci surgeon—only they can evaluate if you are a candidate for da Vinci Surgery.												

	Multiple opinions will give you a better understanding of all factors and surgical options.**
LookingforaSis	What information and resources do you have on your dvh website
dVs Rep JC	you can read/watch stories from other da Vinci Surgery patients, locate a surgeon by putting in your zip code, find clinical data references of additional studies, and read more about common GYN symptoms, conditions and treatment options.**
April Dawn	JC, what are the best questions to ask a doctor when deciding if the robotic surgery is the best route?
dVs Rep JC	I like the new "Checkpoints" section on HysterSisters. It covers all the bases.** :)
LookingforaSis	What are the most common concerns and questions that women have about the da Vinci Hysterectomy?
dVs Rep JC	From our market research, patients are most concerned about resolving their condition with surgery and the speed of recovery/return to normal activities. They also wonder why it may not have been mentioned as an option by their GYN. As I said earlier, not every physician has been trained or is aware of the technology yet.**
April Dawn	Lumpygus, is there anything else you would like to say about your hysterectomy experience?
lumpygus	I just feel really blessed that I found this website and that I was able to have the surgery robotically.**
LookingforaSis	April Dawn, could you share with our members what information and resources do we have on the HysterSisters website?
April Dawn	The HysterSisters site is packed with resources to help members in every stage of the journey, whether they are considering options, already scheduled for surgery and of course for those who are recovering from surgery. I'll share some of the highlights but feel welcome to explore the site and discover more.
April Dawn	Members can post in the Options and Alternatives forum if you haven't made your final decision or use the Pre-Op message board if you will soon schedule or have already scheduled your hysterectomy. Pre- and post-op members can reply in those forums to share their experiences and help with your concerns.
April Dawn	Browse through the Pre-Op Checkpoints and you'll find definitions and information about each type of hysterectomy and how to prepare for them.
April Dawn	Of course there are links to the da Vinci site from HysterSisters, too.
April Dawn	For those who aren't squeamish, there are links to videos of actual hysterectomies.
fritzi64	((HysterSisters))), what questions do you have?
April Dawn	**
fritzi64	I'll be letting some of your questions from earlier through for JC to begin to answer.
fritzi64	Remember, if you have questions for our da Vinci rep, please remember that this is only for general information and you will not be given personal answers that could be considered medical advice
ShannonH	Is it typical to have your arms strapped underneath you? I have bad shoulders and think this would make them so much worse.
dVs Rep JC	Yes, although you can discuss with your doctor your concern to

	see if there are other means to have you secured to the table
slwilso7	Do size and number of fibroids limit surgical options?
dVs Rep JC	They will impact your options, definitely, but may or may not "limit" them. Every situation is of course different**
glacier	What do you consider to be a good amount of experience with the da vinci to feel comfortable?
dVs Rep JC	You can find da Vinci surgeons on our Surgeon Locator on the website
dVs Rep JC	Everyone on there has done 20+
ShannonH	I was so glad my gyn gave me this option, even though she doesn't perform the procedure herself...she referred me to someone who did so I could explore all my options
dVs Rep JC	So that's a good place to start**
smitty89	On average, how many surgeries does an "experienced" da Vinci surgeon have under his/her belt?
glacier	Do drs that are trained in the da vinci method do hysterectomies the other ways too?
dVs Rep JC	Its all relative. Any self-respecting surgeon will be honest with you on how many procedures they've done**
dVs Rep JC	Glacier: yes, they're trained to do other methods prior to doing da Vinci
ShannonH	Can you tell us about patient positioning during the surgery?
dVs Rep JC	Although surgical residents are now learning how to use the technology earlier and earlier in their education**
dVs Rep JC	Patients are tilted back on the table in order to move other organs out of the way which increases the surgeon's room to operate on the organs they need to operate on**
fritzi64	What other questions do you have, either for JC or for lumpygus?
fritzi64	Are there other questions?
smitty89	Do previous c-sections impact your ability to have the da Vinci method?
dVs Rep JC	All prior pelvic surgeries increase the amount of internal scarring and thus the difficulty of the procedure.
glacier	What is the recovery compared to c-sections?
glacier	Is it similar to the older way of doing laparoscopic hysterectomies just a different machine?
dVs Rep JC	These internal scars must be released prior to doing the rest of the surgery, and the da Vinci is uniquely designed to handle these types of complications**
fritzi64	Any more questions?
dVs Rep JC	Yes! the da Vinci is essentially an advanced laparoscopic tool
fritzi64	Lumpygus, is there anything else you'd like to add?
lumpygus	for me there was a huge difference in the recovery aspect of my c-section vs. the hysterectomy
ShannonH	Is it more difficult to perform the procedure on a woman that has not had children due to the uterus being more rigid?
dVs Rep JC	No, not necessarily**
fritzi64	It's time for us to wrap up our program.
fritzi64	I'd like to say some thank-you's.
fritzi64	When we're done with that, we'll keep the room open for a few minutes for some informal conversation.
fritzi64	Thank you, JC, for visiting us here at HysterSisters to provide us with information.
dVs Rep JC	My pleasure!
fritzi64	Lumpygus, thank you for opening up your life to share your

	experiences with everyone tonight who is facing a hysterectomy.
lumpygus	You're welcome, I was honored to be here. Hope my story helps in some way!
fritzi64	April Dawn and LookingforaSis, thank you for conducting the interview.
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.
April Dawn	You're very welcome. :)
smitty89	Thanks for all of the great info everyone!
LookingforaSis	welcome :)
fritzi64	The moderation is off, JC needs to leave the room, and you're all welcome to chat about your upcoming surgeries.
Kathy	We have cookies and coffee on the back table lol
smitty89	yum :)
dVs Rep JC	Thanks all
d2sk8s	calorie free
LookingforaSis	<---- racing Fritzi to the frosted cookies!!!
ShannonH	Who else is nervous about their upcoming surgery?
April Dawn	hehehe - I'm already at the table. ;)
fritzi64	I went to the chocolate shoppe today so am perfectly content
smitty89	Lumpygus, did you have the pulling and tugging sensation with the da Vinci? Seems like that was the worst part about my c-section.
tauruslady	Do we have some warm tea w/ honey my throat is sore
fritzi64	(Not that there's such a think as too much chocolate)
smitty89	Shannon - I certainly am!
glacier	I am soooo nervous I can't stand it!!
tauruslady	Shannon everybody gets nervous about their surgery, sending you big hugs
ShannonH	Me too Smitty
lumpygus	Funny you should mention pulling and tugging
LookingforaSis	oh no G!!! I hope you arent getting sick!!!
ShannonH	Thanx Taurus
fritzi64	Everyone is nervous before their surgeries!
lumpygus	I just started getting some of that these past 2 weeks
tauruslady	Sis - already there :(
lumpygus	feels like round ligament pain if I move a certain way in bed.
LookingforaSis	oooh, sorry G, that's a bummer.
lumpygus	wanted to post the question on the post op recovery board and keep forgetting to
smitty89	Shoot! Seems like that part of my c-sections took the longest to get over.
ShannonH	When is your surgery Smitty?
LookingforaSis	g'nite all.. I have to head to bed... I have to work tomorrow, yuck!
tauruslady	yep, not happy hit me quick
smitty89	Shannon - not scheduled in stone yet, but we are looking at the beginning of November.
ShannonH	I haven't had children or any other abdominal surgery so not really sure what to expect
lumpygus	it's probably the healing process.
lumpygus	from what I read here on the recovery boards, things need to settle into place now that your uterus is no longer there.
fritzi64	I'd had two previous gynecological surgeries, Shannon, and I was still not quite sure what to expect with the hysterectomy.

tauruslady	Shannon is yours laproscopic? I didn't have children or other surgeriss iether
ShannonH	Except I'll be delivering a uterus along with a few other things :)
glacier	I will let you know what I find out tomorrow smitty89. my computer went crazy before!!
smitty89	Shannon - 2 kids via 2 c-sections here and I am not sure what to expect.
ShannonH	Mine will be da vinci
smitty89	Great glacier! I will look forward to talking to you again!
lumpygus	if you go to ORlive.com you can view a vaginal hysterectomy using the DaVinci
tauruslady	Shannon - I had an itchy incision where the camera was located but others didn't bother me
lumpygus	I waited to watch it until after my surgery
lumpygus	I was a wimp beforehand.
ShannonH	I've seen them lumpygus, actually looks pretty neat
smitty89	My dr and I meet Monday to discuss it. He was on the list at the website, so that is encouraging!
glacier	what did you do for the itchy incision?
lumpygus	yes it is Smitty, best of luck to you
smitty89	Ohh I am going to have to check that link out! Thank!
smitty89	Thanks...lol
ShannonH	I think it looks like a science-fiction octopus
tauruslady	some neosporin and some mederma once it was healed
lumpygus	Yes, the contraption is pretty overwhelming and it looks even bigger in person!
fritzi64	Shannon, LOL!
lumpygus	I was glad I saw the picture of it ahead of time.
ShannonH	Yep, does look really big
smitty89	It is a bit intimidating!
glacier	were you a candidate for laproscopic also?
lumpygus	glacier, who is your question addressed to?
glacier	y
ShannonH	Glad I'll be out for it, cuz I am claustrophobic and wouldn't like that thing on top of me
glacier	you sorry!!
lumpygus	lol, yes, but my doctor wasn't 100% sure that the Lupron was going to be effective
lumpygus	thankfully it was
ShannonH	Lumpy, I'm worried about the positioning. I have a bad back, neck and shoulders
glacier	me too!
lumpygus	I was under the impression up until my pre-op appt. that I was having a laproscopic with the possibility of it turning into an abdominal one.
ShannonH	Did they cushion you in any way
lumpygus	I am attributing my soreness in hindsight to how I was strapped to the table.
lumpygus	I guess you should ask your surgeon about this
ShannonH	Yep, I thought that too
lumpygus	I don't recall being cushioned.
ShannonH	Believe me, I will!!
lumpygus	I do recall them telling me that they had to put the IV's in both of my arms because if one were to fail they would have the other one as a back-up because repositioning you once you're "docked" into the machine is difficult.

ShannonH	Oh, terrific...I hate IVs
smitty89	Yuck!!! The IV's are the part I hate the most!
milesg	I'm really getting an ear full. My next appt is Oct 15th - then we schedule my surgery. Did any of you take the Lupron? Were your hotflashes as bad as mine are now?
smitty89	lol Shannon!
lumpygus	When you think about it, it makes sense since you have 5 robotic type arms inside of you.
glacier	Lumpygus, do you think that most people that use this method have fibroids or extreme cases?
ShannonH	Smitty!
lumpygus	Not sure but I do recall my surgeon telling me that the DaVinci is really the way to go if you are a possible cancer patient
smitty89	Glacier, I can tell you that I have more than fibroid that are over 2 cm and my doc still wants to talk to me about it.
lumpygus	or if you have a lot of scar tissue because of the magnification of the machine
ShannonH	Glacier, mine is not an extreme case, but because my uterus won't "give"...no children, my gyn said that the only other option for me was abdominal
ShannonH	I do have fibroids and a cyst on right ovary so they are taking everything :(
smitty89	Oh Shannon, I am feeling for you.
lumpygus	Did you get a second opinion Shannon?
lumpygus	My GYN told me my fibroids were too big
lumpygus	and that the only option was an abdominal hysterectomy
lumpygus	that's why I sought a specialist.
glacier	How do you all feel about taking or leaving the cervix?
ShannonH	When I heard about the robotic, I was sent to the gyn/onco for evaluation for it and decided that was the way I wanted to go
fritzi64	My largest fibroid was the size of a golf ball. I had a vaginal surgery, and the doctor had a hard time pulling the uterus out.
smitty89	Glacier, so undecided! I could use some advice here!
lumpygus	The surgeon left the decision of my keeping my ovaries to me.
ShannonH	There is a history of breast cancer and colon cancer in my family so to be on the safe side they are taking everything
lumpygus	But the cervix, he made that decision for me.
glacier	I know...I am keeping my ovaries because I am 34, but the cervix is up to me.
lumpygus	Since I had no family history, thankfully of ovarian or cervical cancer, I opted to keep everything but my uterus.
ShannonH	I wish I had that option
lumpygus	Now that I kept my cervix, I will need regular pap smears
lumpygus	He recommended my keeping my cervix.
ShannonH	My sister died two years ago of colon cancer...which they initially thought was ovarian
ShannonH	But it had spread to her ovaries
fritzi64	Lumpygus, I have to get pap smears, too, even though I had my cervix removed--due to some previous abnormal paps and vaginal dysplasia.
lumpygus	As I recall he mentioned that it's better for a women sexually to keep the cervix
lumpygus	Plus the issue of the recovery time
glacier	I heard that too about the sex part.
lumpygus	sorry to hear about your sister, Shannon

cmtsp	Sorry to hear that, Shannon
ShannonH	How much longer if recovery if they take the cervix?
ShannonH	Thanks cm
ShannonH	and lumpy
lumpygus	The have to stitch the cervical cuff, I think it's called
glacier	Sorry Shannon. If I were you I woud be getting it out too.
lumpygus	and so there's a longer recovery time
fritzi64	Just in case you're wondering, I have no cervix--and it hasn't cause me any sexual problems :)
lumpygus	also it takes you longer to be cleared for resuming sexual relations
milesg	my doctors first words to me after a pelvic exam was ...HYSTERECTOMY. that made me kind of nervous. I needed a 2nd opinion. She suggests I take everything. I'm pre-cancerous and she said she thinks its best to take it all now so I won't have to come back later in life for something else.
smitty89	good to know fritzi!
ShannonH	I can understand that miles
tauruslady	Shannon - do you have a cancer dx, I think I saw you say you visited a gyn-onc
tauruslady	or a pre-cancer dx?
lumpygus	I read on this website that if you choose to keep your ovaries and they have to be removed at a later date, the surgery is much less invasive.
smitty89	Does anyone have any guilt about having this done? I mean, I am young, under 35, and feel like I am supposed to have my periods for 20 more years....but, they just kill me!
ShannonH	No cancer, he is just one of the drs in town that do davinci
tauruslady	okay :)
fritzi64	That's true, lumpygus.
fritzi64	Smitty, it's important to think carefully and be aware of all the risks.
ShannonH	I've been having periods for 41 years now smitty...no NO problem saying g'bye to them :)
fritzi64	However, you have to make a decision about what you're willing to live with.
lumpygus	So I chose to keep them since I'm no where near menopause, apparently from what the doctor told me from the results of my blood tests.
glacier	I do not feel gully, but I just hope I make the right decision about what to do. I worry about bladder problems too.
fritzi64	If you're willing to live with the risks of a hysterectomy because living with awful periods is just too hard, then at least you're going into it with your eyes open.
ShannonH	But does feel strange to me to be taking all of my "female" parts away
fritzi64	Your female parts are in your heart and your DNA.
smitty89	I am more than willing to get rid of it. The alternative is just not acceptable anymore. Good point fritzi, I definitely have my eyes open.
Inor	Anyone have total hyst. plus gall bladder plus removal of cyst...also may include removing appendix. I'm 60 and have never had an operation before. Is this too much at once?
ShannonH	I've been in periomenopause for 6-7 years and no sign of menopause yet
lumpygus	I don't feel guilty, but at times when I was having such heavy bleeding and facing fibroid issues again, I felt sorry for myself.
ShannonH	Yep lumpy, I just want to feel good again. Tired of being so tired and hurting all the time
cmtsp	Inor~I had all that, except the gall bladder. I think better one surgery than multiple.

lumpygus	Good grief, Inor, is the same surgeon performing it all?
smitty89	Ditto Shannon!
tauruslady	Inor - I've heard of taking appendix but can't say I've heard of taking gallbladder too.
ShannonH	I had my gallbladder out several years ago...not a big deal
Inor	I will have gynocologist and general surgeon both in the OR. Gallbladder is full of stones.
glacier	I feel scared, but I think that is normal. I am going in on monday unless I change my mind and have the da vinci.
ShannonH	Your surgery is Monday Glacier?
glacier	Yes!!
lumpygus	I'll keep you in my prayers, Glacier.
smitty89	Check out the da Vinci link Galcier, and see if any local doctors are on the lsit. That might help you feel more confidant.
ShannonH	What kind?
milesq	I'll be praying for you Glacier...
lumpygus	I must mention that I did a lot of praying, especially those months while on the Lupron.
ShannonH	I can imagine Lumpy
lumpygus	I think finding this website was one of the major issues to my prayers!
ShannonH	So when they take your uterus out vaginally, is it in one piece?
milesq	Lumpy - did you have problems taking the Lupron?
fritzi64	Mine was.
lumpygus	answers not issues
ShannonH	Awesome website
lumpygus	it looks like one piece, Shannon when I viewed it on ORlive.
fritzi64	Sometimes, the uterus is cut up into smaller pieces laparoscopically and then individual pieces are removed.
glacier	thanks...laproscopic hopefully unless she has to recut my c-section again!! I had an ablation last week and they perferated my uterus and they said it was unhealthy and enlarged.
ShannonH	k, thanx
fritzi64	I have a photograph of mine after it was removed.
lumpygus	I didn't have major side effectss on the Lupron miles.
tauruslady	Shannon -mine was
ShannonH	So sorry Glacier
fritzi64	Glacier, are you in a lot of pain from that? It sounds dreadful.
lumpygus	I know so people on this website absolutely hate the Lupron and do not recommend it.
lumpygus	To me it was a means to an end.
glacier	Not too bad now, but I am dreading October!!
ShannonH	I went in for an ablation 2 weeks ago and all they could do was D & C because my uterus has a septum (wall) in it
smitty89	Glacier, that is my biggest fear....I had a choice to have an ablation or a hysterectomy. But I was so afraid that they ablation wouldn't be successful that I just couldn;t do it!
ShannonH	Thanks for the info Taurus
fritzi64	Shannon, did they know that ahead of time about the septum?
lumpygus	I heard that ablations aren't that effective. It seems that way at least from reading the posts on this website.
lumpygus	My doctor said ablation wasn't an option for me.
glacier	I just do not know if I should do it lap or da vinci...I go see 2 more drs tomorrow.
lumpygus	My cousin had one and it worked for her.
fritzi64	My ablation was very effective for the bleeding--but it didn't prevent a

	new fibroid from growing. I had no bleeding for the two years before my hysterectomy.
smitty89	I think the ablations vary so much and my dr said I was in a grey area for success with an ablation....I don't like grey areas!
ShannonH	Knew it was a possibility. An ultrasound years back eluded to the possibility of a bicornate uterus
glacier	I had an ablation in 2007 that was awesome, but did not last.
fritzi64	I have a good friend with a bicornate uterus, so she isn't able to have an ablation, either.
ShannonH	It's possible I have two uteruses and maybe even two vaginas. Want to make sure and ask the dr after surgery if I did
smitty89	Definately get a picture of that Shannon! :)
ShannonH	Rofl Smitty
milesq	yeah get pictures of that! ;)
lumpygus	One of my biggest questions after the surgery was since I kept my ovaries, where do the eggs go since I no longer have a uterus.
ShannonH	I felt like a freak when the dr told me...after that all I could think was "double your pleasure, double your fun" ROFL
tauruslady	they will bring in the student doctors to see that :)
fritzi64	Wow, Shannon.
glacier	it is amazing shannon what they find when the go inside. My friends mom had a cyst with a wisdom tooth in her uterus!
smitty89	lol Shannon!!!
ShannonH	Ugh, have heard of those type of cysts Glacier
fritzi64	I feel kind of disappointed that my uterus only had a fibroid :(
lumpygus	Wow Shannon and Glacier
ShannonH	I'm gonna be fine Smitty
fritzi64	We're closing the chatroom in about five minutes.
smitty89	lol fritzi!
tauruslady	lol Fritz!
smitty89	aww, closing time??
smitty89	:)
glacier	so do you think I should keep my cervix>>>>
fritzi64	yeah, I'm Debbie Downer today.
lumpygus	Fritzi thank you so much for your help doing this!
fritzi64	Glacier, I think you should ask your doctor for the pros and cons of keeping it or not.
smitty89	Yes, thanks so much Fritz!
fritzi64	You're welcome, everyone.
ShannonH	I have fibroids, but vaginal ultrasound said couldn't rule out superimposed denomysois
fritzi64	For those of you not having surgeries this coming week, we have a pre-op chat scheduled for next week--same time, same place.
ShannonH	I thought that was only with women that had a pregnancy?
lumpygus	Glacier, there's questions to ask yourself, family history of cancer, results of previous pap smears, it's best to discuss them with your doctor.
ShannonH	I'll be there Fritz
fritzi64	The pre-op chat will have a much shorter program, with an overview of hysterectomy types, and we'll be able to have lots of time for questions and answers about the hysterectomy experience.
smitty89	Ladies, I am off to browse around....I will be looking for you! I will see you here next week!
ShannonH	Sorry I'm so wordy
fritzi64	Shannon, I'll look for you!

fritzi64	Thanks for coming, smitty
ShannonH	Hope to see ya next week Smitty
glacier	Thanks everyone!! I am new at this kind of thing!
fritzi64	Any last comments or questions, anyone?
smitty89	Shannon - I will be here!
ShannonH	Guess I'm finished for now...thank you so much
fritzi64	I'll be there, too.
milesq	me too...
lumpygus	you're welcome and best of luck
fritzi64	Lumpygus, thanks again for sharing your story tonight.
ShannonH	Thanx very much lumpy for your story
lumpygus	my pleasure
fritzi64	Don't me surprised if you get some private messages from some of these members with more questions for you :)
lumpygus	not a problem
ShannonH	Nite all and thanks for a wonderful service to all of us
lumpygus	I actually got one after someone read my hysterectomy story
fritzi64	Oh, that's sweet, lumpygus.
fritzi64	Okay, (((HysterSisters))),

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