

Surgeons Remove Cancerous Kidney with Single Incision, California First

February 9, 2009

Jackie Carr

On Thursday, February 5, 2009, surgeons at the University of California, San Diego Medical Center removed a patient's diseased kidney through one incision hidden in the belly button. No other incisions were used. This groundbreaking procedure is the 15th in a series of single-incision clinical trial surgeries performed by the UC San Diego Center for the Future of Surgery.

"The successful removal of a kidney containing a seven centimeter tumor, with a single incision, is a pivotal advancement in cancer care," said Ithaar H. Derweesh, MD, associate professor of surgery for the Division of Urology and urologic oncologist at UC San Diego Medical Center and Moores UCSD Cancer Center. "This less invasive approach offers patients a shorter recovery time, less need for pain medication, and an improved cosmetic outcome."

During a traditional laparoscopic surgery, three to five small abdominal incisions would be made to insert a camera and instruments to remove the kidney. This novel surgery required one incision in the navel.

"The idea of being able to perform a surgery with fewer incisions and requiring a shorter hospital stay is particularly attractive to cancer patients who may face repeated surgeries," said Santiago Horgan, MD, professor of surgery, and Director of the Center for the Future of Surgery at UC San Diego. "We are currently testing these scarless procedures for the treatment of cancer, obesity and other digestive disorders."

According to the American Cancer Society, kidney cancer is an expanding cancer, increasing at a rate of two to three percent each year and affecting approximately 55,000 patients in the United States. Risk factors for developing kidney cancer include smoking, obesity and hypertension.

"Kidney cancer is among the 10 most common cancers in men and women," said Derweesh, an expert in kidney-preserving surgeries and a member of the American Urological Association's Guideline Committee for the treatment of kidney tumors. "The combination of kidney cancers being diagnosed at earlier stages and smaller sizes, and the ability perform less invasive surgeries, presents a new horizon of care for these patients."

Established in 1965, the Department of Surgery at UC San Diego Medical Center represents more than 80 leading surgeons with specialties in open, minimally invasive, and scarless surgery techniques. The Department is committed to advancing surgical education by teaching and training the next generation of innovators; researching, testing and developing groundbreaking surgical techniques; providing superior patient care and service; and attracting a world-class faculty.

Every year surgeons at UC San Diego Medical Center and Moores UCSD Cancer Center are recognized locally as San Diego's Top Doctors and nationally as the physician-scientists who are developing emerging surgical techniques.

The Moores UCSD Cancer Center is one of the nation's 41 National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers, combining research, clinical care and community outreach to advance the prevention, treatment and cure of cancer.

Media Contact: Jackie Carr, 619-543-6427







