

James Poore experienced a quick recovery from prostate cancer surgery and is looking forward to riding his beach cruiser.

# CUTTING-EDGE CANCER SURGERY



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## A NEW ROBOTIC PROCEDURE ENABLED ONE PATIENT TO GO HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL QUICKLY.

James Poore was surprised when routine bloodwork revealed that he had high levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA), indicating possible prostate cancer. A follow-up biopsy in September 2019 confirmed his fears. “I was shocked,” says James, 69, of Lakewood.

Thankfully, James had Stage I cancer, meaning the disease was growing slowly and was confined to his prostate, a walnut-size gland that produces fluid that carries sperm. He had a few treatment options, which included: watch and wait to see if the cancer progressed; undergo radiation treatments to eradicate the cancer gradually; or have surgery to remove it immediately.

### REVOLUTIONARY TECHNOLOGY

James had lost his brother to leukemia, so he didn't want to take any chances with his own health. He opted for surgery. In November 2019, he became one of the first patients at Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) to be operated on with the hospital's new robot-assisted surgery device, called da Vinci SP (Single Port). While the hospital was already using a sophisticated robotic system to perform prostate surgeries, the new device relies on a single “port,” a metal cylinder through which surgeons introduce instruments into the body, says Pierre Mendoza, MD, a urologist and robotic surgeon at MMC. “Instead of using multiple ports, which require multiple incisions, a surgeon can now make just one or two incisions,” he says. Typically, robotic prostate cancer surgery involves five or six ports. With fewer incisions,



PIERRE MENDOZA, MD

patients have a better cosmetic result, should experience less pain and may have a lower risk of infection, says Dr. Mendoza.

Robot-assisted devices help surgeons perform

procedures with more precision. With the da Vinci SP system, the surgeon operates with the help of a three-dimensional, high-definition view of the surgical area. He or she controls the surgical instruments through a console, which translates the surgeon's hand movements in real time. “I expect that this new technology will improve overall outcomes for patients undergoing prostate cancer surgery,” says Dr. Mendoza. “With the enhanced visualization and precise instrumentation offered by the robotic technology, we're able to lower the risk of complications, including bleeding.” As a result, patients should have quicker recoveries, shorter hospital stays and a faster return to normal activity.

MMC is one of the few hospitals in the country and only the second in New Jersey to use this single-port robotic technology. MMC surgeons have used the da Vinci SP system in about 20 procedures so far, including prostate cancer surgeries, kidney tumor removal and kidney reconstruction. The device is also approved for certain ear, nose and throat (ENT) procedures, and it's anticipated that the technology will be approved for more types of surgery in the future.

MMC physicians have been keeping patients overnight for observation as they test the cutting-edge technology. But Dr. Mendoza predicts that in the future, most patients will have the procedure on an outpatient basis, meaning they will go home the day of the procedure. “With the single-port technique, we're now seeing patients go home immediately after surgery or in the early postoperative period, eliminating the need for an overnight stay,” he says. That's a significant improvement, since patients having traditional, open surgery stay in the hospital for five to seven days. Those who have the multi-port robotic procedure typically stay one to two days.



### BEST CANDIDATES

The ideal candidates for the new single-port robotic procedure—in which robotic instruments are introduced into the body through one incision—are patients with Stage I or II prostate or kidney cancers, which haven't spread to other organs, says Pierre Mendoza, MD, a urologist and robotic surgeon at Monmouth Medical Center. Also eligible are patients who need pyeloplasty, a reconstructive procedure for kidney blockages.

In some cases, patients with more advanced cancer of the prostate or kidneys may also be good candidates for single-port robotic surgery, says Dr. Mendoza.

### A SMOOTH RECOVERY

James' surgery went well, and he was ready to go home the day after the procedure. He took only a few painkillers for a day. The only side effect he experienced was mild urinary incontinence, which is associated with all prostate cancer surgeries. Nearly all patients have complete recovery of urinary control within a few months.

Overall, James is grateful he doesn't have to worry about the cancer any longer. “It's a big relief,” he says. During his recovery, he's been walking his dog, Sandy May, and using his stationary bike at home to get back in shape. He's hoping he'll soon be able to return to one of his favorite activities—riding his beach cruiser several miles a day. “I'm looking forward to getting outside in the good weather,” says James.

To learn more about robotic surgery at Monmouth Medical Center, call **888.724.7123**.

