

Media Contact: Russell Rian  
214-648-3404  
[russell.rian@utsouthwestern.edu](mailto:russell.rian@utsouthwestern.edu)

## **UT Southwestern surgeons perform first robot-assisted procedures in weight loss, colon and gastric fields**

DALLAS – Nov. 28, 2006 – UT Southwestern Medical Center surgeons are the first in North Texas to perform robotically assisted laparoscopic gastric-bypass and colon-resections surgeries.

The procedures were performed using DaVinci, a four-armed robot controlled by the surgeon via a joystick. DaVinci can provide better camera views and more precise surgical manipulations than are available in traditional laparoscopic surgeries.

The robot can offer easier access to some of the more inaccessible places in the body such as abdominal and gastrointestinal areas. As a result, laparoscopic surgeons expect the robotic procedures to grow in popularity for colon, gastric and esophageal operations, said Dr. Edward Livingston, chairman of GI/endocrine surgery.

Surgeries for colon cancers are on the rise, while gastric bypass procedures also are becoming more common.

- Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in America with more than 106,000 new cases in 2006
- Gastric bypass has become more popular as obesity among the nation's population increases. More than 140,000 gastric bypass procedures are performed annually in the United States.

Laparoscopic surgeries, also called minimally invasive surgeries, are performed via several tiny holes rather than one long incision. This usually results in fewer complications, shorter recovery times and less post-operative pain.

In addition, UT Southwestern was part of a landmark study that proved laparoscopic surgery for colon cancer is just as effective as traditional open surgery.

The robot-assisted surgeries have all those patient-centered advantages, plus the robot often can provide better visuals, access and mechanical stamina, which makes an operation less-tiring for the surgeons, said Dr. Livingston.

"For particular operations, the robot has an advantage," Dr. Livingston said. "It's a

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## **Robot-assisted surgery – 2**

combination of access, depth perception and magnification that provides the advantage in some cases.”

The DaVinci camera offers high-definition imaging so surgeons can see depth measurements not possible with the conventional laparoscopic cameras. And maneuvering the joystick controls on the robot is often easier than the more complex manipulations required by laparoscopic instruments.

Dr. Homero Rivas, assistant professor of GI/endocrine surgery, performed the two new procedures through the Southwestern Center for Minimally Invasive Surgery, which has premiered many of the area’s firsts in laparoscopic procedures and research.

The Southwestern Center for Minimally Invasive Surgery is one of only seven facilities in North America, and the only one in Texas, to be accredited by the American College of Surgeons for its \$2 million training lab. It also has been named a Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence by the American Society for Bariatric Surgery.

UT Southwestern surgeons previously performed Texas’ first laparoscopic bypass procedure and Dallas’ first lap band operation.

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### **About UT Southwestern Medical Center**

UT Southwestern Medical Center, one of the premier medical centers in the nation, integrates pioneering biomedical research with exceptional clinical care and education. Its more than 1,400 full-time faculty members – including four active Nobel Prize winners, more than any other medical school in the world – are responsible for groundbreaking medical advances and are committed to translating science-driven research quickly to new clinical treatments. UT Southwestern physicians provide medical care in 40 specialties to nearly 89,000 hospitalized patients and oversee 2.1 million outpatient visits a year.

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