

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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LAPAROSCOPIC KIDNEY REMOVAL LESSENS PAIN, SHORTENS HOSPITAL STAY

DALLAS – June 9, 2000 – Friends told Roy Thornberry, 55, that surgery to remove his cancerous kidney would lay him up for weeks and cause severe pain.

Instead, the Kaufman resident said he left the hospital two days after surgery "feeling great" and sporting three Band-Aids.

Doctors at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas removed Thornberry's kidney laparoscopically through three tiny incisions; the longest was little more than half an inch. The results, Thornberry said, amazed his friends.

"They told me about the pain, the long hospital stay and the big incision," he said. "Instead I got to tell them I was ready to mow the lawn after four days."

Dr. Jeffrey Cadeddu, assistant professor of urology, performed Thornberry's surgery in February.

"Laparoscopic kidney surgery is relatively new and challenging," he said. "By removing either benign or malignant diseased kidneys through laparoscopic surgery (also called minimally invasive surgery), we are saving the patient a lot of pain and time in the hospital."

Kidney cancer is relatively rare. The kidney, a little larger than the size of a fist, is traditionally removed through a large incision made just below or between the ribs. Patients remain in the hospital four to five days and spend up to six weeks recuperating. But the laparoscopic method, which takes between two and three hours, allows patients to leave the hospital in two days and be back at work in two weeks.

In the last year, UT Southwestern physicians have performed more than 40 laparoscopic kidney procedures. As patients become aware of the laparoscopic advantages, Cadeddu expects that number to increase.

UT Southwestern urologists have expanded their laparoscopic work beyond treating kidney cancer to include kidney reconstruction and partial kidney removal.

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