



# A Better You

Embracing Health...Embracing Life

Spring 2009

## Video-Assisted Thoracoscopic Surgery (VATS)

# Advancements in Minimally Invasive Chest Surgery

Each year in the United States, more than 1 million patients undergo thoracic surgery to treat conditions affecting organs inside the thorax, or chest.\* Traditionally, thoracic surgery requires that a surgeon make a 6- to 10-inch incision and separate the ribs in order to see and access these organs. While such surgery is still necessary at times, medical advancements have presented another option for patients. At Pasco Regional Medical Center (PRMC), we are proud to offer a minimally invasive alternative called video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery, or VATS.

### What Is VATS?

VATS is a minimally invasive procedure used to diagnose and treat chest problems. With VATS, a surgeon accesses organs within the chest through a few small incisions. "We place a scope in one of the incisions that acts as a camera to guide the instruments used to perform the procedure," explains A. Hadi Hakki, M.D., thoracic surgeon at Pasco Regional Medical Center. "These instruments are smaller than a surgeon's hand and require smaller incisions with less risk of infection." The camera transmits magnified images of the patient's chest cavity to a monitor, which allows the surgeon to guide surgical instruments through the other incisions to perform the procedure.

### The VATS Advantage

Because the incisions are so small – most are 1 inch or less – VATS is considered a less-invasive alternative to conventional open thoracic surgery. "It's efficient and

patients often experience less pain," states Dr. Hakki. In addition, patients may experience a shorter hospital stay, need less pain medication, have minimal or no scarring, and return to regular daily life more quickly.

VATS is often used to diagnose and treat:

- **Lung cancer** – to test for cancer by removing portions of the lung, lobes and suspicious spots on the lungs.
- **Empyemas** – to drain a collection of fluid resulting from lung infections, such as pneumonia.
- **Hyperhidrosis** – to remove or cut nerves that cause excessive sweating.
- **Collapsed lung (Pneumothorax)** – to re-expand the lung and heal the lung surface.
- **Lymphoma** – to diagnose cancers in the lymph nodes.
- **Interstitial lung disease** – to biopsy the lung for diagnosis and to establish the best plan of treatment.

### Is VATS Right for You?

If you are wondering whether VATS is an appropriate treatment for you, contact your physician. He or she can evaluate your condition in consultation with one of our thoracic surgeons to determine the right treatment for you.

\* Source: University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

To receive your free brochure about VATS, please contact the PRMC Marketing Department at (352) 521-1593.

## Meet Our Thoracic Surgeons



### A. Hadi Hakki, M.D.

Board-Certified Thoracic Surgery  
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### Ahmad Hamzah, M.D.

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## Smoke-Free for Better Health

In 2008, Pasco Regional Medical Center (PRMC) announced a partnership with the Florida Department of Health and all Pasco County hospitals to become tobacco-free for better health.



Smoking is a major contributing factor in the top four causes of death: heart disease, cancer, stroke and respiratory disease.

"Tobacco-free means that after Nov. 1, 2009, patients, physicians, vendors, guests and employees will not be permitted to smoke or use tobacco anywhere within the property – that includes all outdoor portions of the campus, even parking lots," says Doug Collins, Director of Respiratory Services and the Tobacco-Free Environment Task Force Chair.

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# The ABZZZZS of Sleep Apnea

Most people who have sleep apnea do not know they have it because it only occurs while they sleep.

**A**pnea occurs when a person stops breathing for 10 or more seconds. When you stop breathing, levels of oxygen decrease in the body, which places a burden on your cardiovascular system. About half of all people with sleep apnea develop high blood pressure from this strain on their cardiovascular system, and most are at risk for stroke and heart failure.

Statistics indicate that nearly 18 million Americans suffer from sleep apnea. Symptoms include excessive daytime sleepiness, snoring loudly, morning headaches, sore throat or dry throat in the morning and gasping in your sleep.

There are three types of sleep apnea: obstructive sleep apnea, central sleep apnea and mixed sleep apnea. **Obstructive sleep apnea** is the most common form and occurs most often in people who are overweight. During obstructive sleep apnea, your airway collapses or is blocked. This blockage causes shallow breathing or breathing pauses. As you try to breathe, the air that squeezes past the blockage causes you to snore.

**Central sleep apnea** is less common and occurs when your brain fails to signal your muscles to breathe. **Mixed sleep apnea** is a combination of both obstructive and central sleep apnea.

**B**eginning with a sleep study, called a polysomnography, your physician can determine if you have sleep apnea. An overnight study completed at Pasco Regional Medical Center's



Sleep Lab will monitor your brain waves, muscle tension, eye movement, respiration and oxygen levels while you sleep comfortably in one of our private rooms. The information gathered from this sleep study will help your physician design the proper treatment to help you get a better night's rest.

**Z**zzzs are essential for your well-being. For more information, talk to your physician about the Sleep Lab at Pasco Regional Medical Center or **call the Sleep Lab for your free brochure at (813) 783-1866.**



When your doctor prescribes an outpatient procedure or diagnostic test, you can rest assured that PRMC will provide the prompt, quality care you need, when you need it.

## Outpatient Services and Treatments at Pasco Regional

Most of us have left the doctor's office at one time or another with a prescription for an outpatient procedure or diagnostic test. This test or procedure is utilized to help your physician determine the proper diagnosis and to develop a plan of care for your treatment.

Pasco Regional Medical Center offers a variety of outpatient treatments and tests and is home to some of the most advanced diagnostic equipment in East Pasco.

Walk-ins are welcome for routine X-rays, such as chest, hand, feet and spine. Appointments are necessary for special procedures such as CT scans, ultrasound, MRI, digital mammograms and nuclear medicine. It is easy to schedule your appointment by calling our One Call Scheduling Specialist at **(352) 521-1592**, Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday until 4 p.m. For information on Wellness and Prevention Programs, please visit our Web site at [www.PascoRegionalmc.com](http://www.PascoRegionalmc.com) or call the Marketing Department at **(352) 521-1593.**

Our wide range of outpatient services includes the following:

### Diagnostics

MRI  
Ultrasound  
Digital Mammography  
Nuclear Medicine  
64-Slice CT Scanner  
Laboratory (Blood Tests)  
Cardiac Catheterization

### Wellness and Prevention

Diabetic Education  
Childbirth Classes  
Surgical Weight Loss Seminars  
Lunch & Learns

### Treatment

Endoscopy  
Pain Management  
Wound Healing  
Hyperbaric Medicine  
Sleep Medicine  
Emergency Room

### Rehabilitation

Physical Therapy  
Speech Therapy

# A Second Chance for a Trimmer You

When the benefits of weight-loss surgery fade, there is a new way to restore them.

Gastric bypass, a key bariatric (weight loss) operation, has helped many obese individuals achieve dramatic weight loss. Keeping all that weight off, however, can be a challenge. Most patients do well for one to four years, but sometimes backslide when they fail to maintain proper nutrition and exercise habits after their surgery.

"Maintenance is up to them – they have to make an effort," explains Lee Grossbard, M.D., a bariatric surgeon at Pasco Regional Medical Center.

## Feel Full Again

What complicates that effort is that the stomach and its opening to the small intestine tend to stretch. After a while, the patient may need more food to feel full, as the pouch and opening keep stretching. Until recently, the options for renewing weight loss were limited.

"Because gastric bypass surgery leaves a lot of internal scar tissue, the risks involved with a traditional second – or 'revision' – operation are far greater," Dr. Grossbard says. "First-time complication rates for leaks at the attachment sites, for example, are about 1 percent, but rise to 10 percent with the second surgery," he says. "In fact, all complications increase with revision surgery."

## The ROSE Procedure

A new procedure at Pasco Regional Medical Center eliminates those risks. Pasco Regional is one of just a handful of hospitals nationwide to offer a new procedure, dubbed ROSE for restorative obesity surgery endolumenal. This procedure avoids cutting through scar tissue, and instead allows the surgeon to access the stomach through the mouth and esophagus. Endolumenal means "inside the tube," indicating that the approach is from within the stomach rather than by cutting in from the outside. Once there, the doctor can reduce the size of the stomach pouch and the opening to the intestine from the inside.



"ROSE is the next frontier. The benefits to people who have gained weight after bypasses are enormous," says Richard DiCicco, M.D., a bariatric surgeon at Pasco Regional Medical Center.

## The Benefits to Patients

Done under general anesthesia, the surgery takes about an hour. The patient goes home the same day, and experiences little to no pain.

The results of the procedure are immediately evident. Patients begin to lose weight right away and can expect to lose as much as 15 pounds in the first six weeks. Because the stomach pouch is restored to its post-bypass size, patients who eat too much will feel discomfort – like a sharp pain in the back – reminding them to limit their meal size. While the surgery is just a tool to get the patient back on the right track, keeping the weight off depends on the patient's commitment to dietary lifestyle changes.

If you have had gastric bypass and would like to learn if the ROSE procedure is right for you, schedule your consultation with Dr. Lee Grossbard or Dr. Richard DiCicco – the only bariatric surgeons in Central Florida trained to perform the ROSE procedure. For more information on ROSE and to view a video of the procedure, visit [www.PascoRegionalmc.com](http://www.PascoRegionalmc.com).

## Smoke-Free for Better Health

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"We aren't telling smokers they must quit smoking, just that they won't be able to smoke here," Collins explains.

To ensure the smooth transition to a tobacco-free campus, PRMC is implementing a multifaceted, tobacco-free plan spread over a one-year period, including educational programs for staff and the public, support groups and classes for smoking cessation, and signage to inform the public when entering the property.

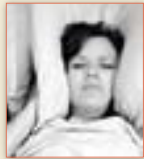
"We are months from our launch date of Nov. 1. However, we are already seeing many of our employees embrace this plan. Several employees are using this as the perfect opportunity to kick the habit," Collins says. "While we weren't expecting employees to quit smoking, we are happy for everyone who makes this choice for better health."

## Inside This Issue



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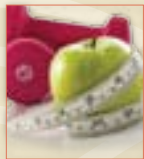
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13100 Fort King Road  
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**(352) 521-1100**  
[www.PascoRegionalmc.com](http://www.PascoRegionalmc.com)

## Calendar of Events

### LAP-BAND® Weight Loss Seminars

Are you ready to finally lose the weight and change your life? If so, register to attend one of our free surgical weight loss seminars. Our surgeons are pioneers in the field of LAP-BAND surgery and have performed more than 800 procedures at Pasco Regional Medical Center (PRMC). These seminars are held monthly from 6 to 8 p.m. at PRMC in Medical Plaza I, Suite 108. Make your reservation today by calling **(352) 518-1090** or toll-free **(888) 568-0967**.

- **May 6**
- **June 3**
- **July 1**

### Childbirth Education Classes

This is a series of five classes, including infant/child CPR. They focus on childbirth techniques, breathing exercises, what to expect, the role of the support

person and how to manage labor. These classes are free to parents delivering at PRMC. All classes are held from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at PRMC in Medical Plaza I, Suite 107. For registration information, please call **(352) 521-1138**.

- **May 13 – Child/Infant CPR**  
**May 20, 21, 27, 28 – Childbirth Classes**
- **June 11 – Child/Infant CPR**  
**June 17, 18, 24, 25 – Childbirth Classes**
- **July 16 – Child/Infant CPR**  
**July 22, 23, 29, 30 – Childbirth Classes**

### Diabetic Support Group

This monthly support group meets on the first Thursday of the month from 2 to 3 p.m. to discuss nutrition and health issues related to managing your diabetes. To register to attend, please call **(352) 521-1100, ext. 1423**.

### Living with Diabetes Program

A unique education and exercise rehabilitation program for diabetics, this program is presented by our pharmacist, dietitian, physical therapists, as well as wound care and diabetic educators. Patient progress is monitored to ensure each patient is as safe as possible during his or her individualized diet and exercise plan. The Living with Diabetes Program follows specific guidelines from the American Diabetes Association. To be accepted into this program, you will need a prescription from your physician, a commitment to getting control of your diabetes and a one-time fee of \$50. For more information, please call **(352) 521-1100, ext. 1423**.