



A robot and my doctor changed my life

# ROBOTIC REVOLUTION



*Left: Mitchell V. Brock, M.D., with  
Tabitha Vine of Blackshear.  
Above: Taleka Tillman of Brunswick.*

When you're told you need surgery, a multitude of thoughts may run through your mind. Fears of pain and scarring afterward. Dread over being away from your family during an extended hospital stay. Worries about a long and difficult recovery.

But with the new da Vinci® Surgical System, patients requiring hysterectomies, removal of uterine fibroids and complex endometriosis cases can put those concerns to rest. Physicians at the Southeast Georgia

Health System Brunswick Campus are now using this advanced robotic-assisted surgery with successful results, including less pain, a shorter hospital stay and faster recovery.

## A MORE EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUE

Obstetrician and gynecologist Mitchell V. Brock, M.D., was the first surgeon in Brunswick to use the da Vinci Surgical System. He explains that while robot-assisted surgery itself isn't new, the da Vinci system allows surgeons to perform complex laparoscopic procedures

with greater control, visualization and precision.

"It's the same procedures done in a new way that is more beneficial to the patient," Dr. Brock says. "The camera that goes through the belly button operates like conventional laparoscopic equipment, but the images are in high-definition 3-D, and the camera magnifies up to 10 times. And instead of standing over the patient and using straight-sticked laparoscopic instruments, surgeons sit at a console and operate robotic arms that are 'wristed,' which give us a lot more dexterity."

## GREATER OPTIONS FOR PATIENTS

The improved agility that the da Vinci system provides can be especially helpful when performing surgery on larger patients, says obstetrician and gynecologist Darrin A. Strickland, M.D.

"The robot not only allows for smaller incisions but helps us perform surgeries on larger patients that we otherwise might



## Experts Trained in da Vinci

The four obstetricians and gynecologists currently using da Vinci are (pictured above, clockwise from lower left) Mitchell V. Brock, M.D., James F. Gowen, M.D., Jason M. Joseph, M.D., and Darrin A. Strickland, M.D.

### What procedures are being performed with the da Vinci?

Our board-certified physicians and surgical teams who perform robotic procedures have received advanced training on the da Vinci system for gynecological surgeries, such as:

- + Hysterectomy
- + Myomectomy (removal of fibroids)
- + Ovarian cystectomy (removal of ovarian cysts and masses)
- + Sacrocolpopexy (treatment for pelvic organ prolapse)
- + Treatment of cervical and endometrial cancer

not be able to,” Dr. Strickland says. “And patients can have surgery and usually go home the same afternoon or the next morning.”

### FASTER RECOVERY

The da Vinci system is already benefiting patients in Brunswick. While offering all the potential advantages of a minimally invasive procedure—including less pain,

scarring and blood loss, and less need for blood transfusions—the system also enables a quicker recovery and faster return to normal daily activities.

That’s certainly been the case for Tabitha Vine of Blackshear, who in March became the Health System’s first da Vinci surgery patient. Dr. Brock performed a total hysterectomy on Mrs. Vine using

the da Vinci Surgical System, and her recovery has been everything this mother of six had hoped for.

“I had the surgery on Friday, came home on Saturday, and I was able to get up and get around on Monday without much pain,” she says.

Taleka Tillman, 31 of Brunswick, had a similar experience when her surgery to remove 21 uterine fibroids was performed using the da Vinci system. She was able to return home after just 1½ days in the hospital, and is back to her old self again.

“I can bend and stoop and do all the things I could before, and I don’t have any pain,” Ms. Tillman says.

### DEDICATED TEAM

Physicians aren’t the only ones getting up to speed on the da Vinci system. Fran Gill, R.N., clinical leader, Patient Services, is part of a dedicated team that has undergone training to support robot-assisted surgeries.

Troy Thurmond, director of Surgical Services, says the da Vinci system helps the Health System stay current with the latest advancements in minimally invasive surgery and provides the same high level of technology in Glynn County that is available in major metropolitan areas to the north and south. ❏

### Could da Vinci Help You?

To learn more about the technology and whether it’s right for you, visit [sghs.org/davinci](http://sghs.org/davinci) or call **912-466-5798**.

