‘Not One Side Effect’

CyberKnife® treats breast cancer faster and with fewer downsides.

“A piece of cake!” Chances are this isn’t how you’d expect a woman to describe what it was like to be treated with radiation for breast cancer. But this is exactly how Marilyn Steiner, 75, sums up her experience as one of the first patients at Southeast Georgia Health System treated for breast cancer with the CyberKnife® M6 Robotic Radiosurgery System. This state-of-the-art technology uses a computerized robotic arm to deliver high-dose beams of radiation. It kills cancer cells with extreme accuracy, while sparing healthy tissue in the breast, skin, lungs and heart.

“I had no fatigue, no skin irritation — not one side effect,” Ms. Steiner says. “There’s nothing I couldn’t do after a treatment.”

A first in Georgia
Southeast Georgia Health System is the only medical center in Georgia to offer the CyberKnife M6 Series, the latest CyberKnife technology and one that provides unmatched precision. Installed in November 2017 at the Cancer Care Center in Brunswick, it replaced an earlier CyberKnife system primarily used to treat prostate and lung cancers.

“This more advanced technology allows us to dose radiation more efficiently and better target irregularly shaped tumors, which breast tumors often are,” says Timothy A. Jamieson, M.D., Ph.D., a board-certified radiation oncologist and medical director of the CyberKnife program and the Cancer Care Centers in Brunswick and Camden. The precision of the new CyberKnife technology means that it can now be used to treat women who need radiation therapy after a lumpectomy — a surgery that removes only the cancerous breast tumor plus a small amount of nearby healthy tissue.

Doctors almost always advise radiation after a lumpectomy to help destroy any remaining cancer cells in the breast after surgery.

Schedule your mammogram today!

**Breast Care Center**
2500 Starling St.
Brunswick
912-466-5235

**Medical Plaza–Brunswick**
3025 Shrine Rd., Suite 160
Brunswick
912-466-1240

**Women’s Imaging–Camden Campus**
2000 Dan Proctor Dr.
St. Marys
912-576-6190
Mammograms take only a few minutes to perform, but they could add years to a woman’s life. That’s because regular mammograms are one of a woman’s best defenses against breast cancer. “Mammograms can detect the disease early, before it generates symptoms, and when it’s easier to successfully treat,” says Karen Crosby, R.N., BSN, navigator, Breast Care Center. “So mammograms, not diamonds, should be a girl’s best friend. Women also need to ‘know’ their bodies and their breasts so that they notice when there’s a change and can report anything unusual to their doctor.”

Ask your doctor when — and how often — you should have a mammogram. For women at average risk, the American Cancer Society advises the following:

- **40 to 44 years old**: You have the option to start screening with yearly mammograms.
- **45 to 54 years old**: Schedule a mammogram every year.
- **55 and older**: Switch to mammograms every other year or continue with annual ones.

If you have a strong family history of breast cancer or other risk factors, you may need to be screened earlier or more frequently. This is why open communication with your health care provider is essential to staying healthy.

“CyberKnife delivers radiation only to the immediate area surrounding the original tumor, where breast cancer is most likely to recur,” says Dr. Jamieson, who planned and oversaw Ms. Steiner’s treatment.

Traditionally, radiation has been delivered to a woman’s entire breast, and treatment lasted five to six weeks. CyberKnife treatments are accelerated over just five days. As a result, women experience few, if any, of the side effects that may occur with conventional radiation therapy.

The new CyberKnife also reduces the time of each treatment — it takes only 15 to 30 minutes.

Not all women who have lumpectomies meet the criteria for treatment with CyberKnife. Women must have breast tumors that are three centimeters or smaller, no lymph node involvement, and clean margins — meaning there were no cancerous cells at the edge of a breast tissue sample.

Still, as many as one out of three women with breast cancer may meet these criteria, Dr. Jamieson says.

**A healthy future**

As for Ms. Steiner, “She has a very good prognosis — it’s unlikely that her cancer will come back,” says Stephen Barrett, M.D., a board-certified general surgeon with Southeast Georgia Physician Associates–Glynn General & Vascular Surgery, who performed Ms. Steiner’s biopsy and lumpectomy.

“Both doctors were fabulous,” Ms. Steiner says. “They never rushed through anything. They were as wonderfully caring as they were skilled, and they were very respectful of my opinions and what I wanted.”

Ms. Steiner also has high praise for all the nurses who gave her consistent practical and emotional support. Of special help was Karen Crosby, R.N., BSN, navigator, Breast Care Center.

“Across the board, the quality of care at Southeast Georgia Health System is exceptional,” Ms. Steiner emphasizes. “I came from the Philadelphia area, where there are so many top-notch major hospitals, and I would rank Southeast Georgia Health System right up there with any of them.”