



a Gentler Solution

Women get back to health faster and easier with less invasive breast cancer treatment or gynecological surgery

By Teresa Caldwell Board

When Dollie Thomas went to the doctor in February 2008 for heavy, painful periods, she had a pelvic sonogram, as well as an overdue mammogram. Thomas, a 50-year-old Plano resident, wasn't surprised to be diagnosed with benign uterine fibroid tumors. But she didn't expect to find out she also had breast cancer.

Reflecting on the nine months of surgeries and treatments that followed, she says, "Everything went so well." What made an arduous series of medical treatments more bearable? Thomas benefited from several minimally invasive options.

Targeting Breast Cancer Precisely

Breast cancer diagnosis and treatment include several less invasive options, says Lynn Canavan, M.D., a breast surgeon on the medical staff at Baylor Regional Medical Center at Plano.

First, **needle biopsies** help women avoid surgery to diagnose breast cancer. Guided by mammogram or ultrasound,

Survivor Story

To hear more from Dollie Thomas about how she's surviving and thriving after her treatment, watch her video at **BaylorHealth.com/mystory**.

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physicians use a hollow needle to remove multiple tissue samples as thin as a pencil lead. “It’s better for women mentally and physically,” Dr. Canavan says. Because 80 percent of breast biopsies are benign, many women are able to skip the operating room altogether.

Because of the size of her tumor, Thomas needed a mastectomy to remove her left breast. But for many women, **lumpectomy** is a less-invasive treatment option, in which only the tumor and some surrounding tissue are removed. “With radiation, lumpectomy can be equivalent to mastectomy in effectiveness,” Dr. Canavan says.

Third, **partial breast radiation** following a lumpectomy uses more concentrated radiation for a shorter time. “The majority of breast cancer recurrences are within 1 centimeter of the lumpectomy cavity,” Dr. Canavan says. Traditional radiation treatment lasts about six and a half weeks, but partial breast radiation is done twice a day for just five days.

Finally, **sentinel lymph node biopsy** spares women the side effects—including swelling and chronic pain in the inner arm—of removing all the lymph nodes under the arm to find out whether breast cancer has spread.

“We find the first one to four lymph nodes that drain the breast, and if they are clear there is a 95 percent chance there is no cancer in the rest,” Dr. Canavan explains. Thanks to this option, Thomas had only two nodes removed to confirm her cancer hadn’t spread.

Faster Recovery from Surgery

Gynecologists also use less invasive approaches when possible. With minimally invasive gynecological surgery, “Women typically have less pain, blood

loss and infection, as well as shorter hospital stays and a quicker return to work,” says Murray Fox, M.D., a gynecologist on the

Baylor Plano medical staff.

“The most common minimally invasive surgery I perform is placing a sling to treat stress urinary incontinence,” says Muriel Boreham, M.D., a urogynecologist on the medical staff at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas and Baylor Plano. Using two small incisions over the pubic bone and a 3-centimeter vaginal incision, a sling made of polypropylene mesh is placed underneath the urethra to support it and promote better bladder control.

As a less invasive alternative to open surgery, laparoscopic surgery uses several small incisions to insert special instruments and a scope to see inside the body. Some laparoscopic surgeries are now performed with the help of a robot.

With da Vinci robotic surgery, the surgeon works at a console with a 3-dimensional, magnified, high-definition screen. “The visualization of the surgical field is second to none,” Dr. Fox says. As well, the robotic instruments are much more precise than traditional laparoscopic tools. “The robot wrist has more

range of motion than mine does,” says Barbara Coulter-Smith, D.O., an obstetrician/gynecologist on the medical staff at Baylor Regional Medical Center at Grapevine.

When Maria Lummus, a 44-year-old Euless resident, had a robot-assisted laparoscopic hysterectomy in January 2009, she was back to work within two weeks. “Four days after the surgery, I cannot tell you how good I felt. I wish I would have had it done years ago.”

Lummus’s endometriosis was very invasive, but the precision of robotic surgery made it possible for her to avoid an open surgery. “With the robot, we can do a more difficult case less invasively,” Dr. Coulter-Smith says.

After Thomas had a robot-assisted laparoscopic hysterectomy in November 2008, she says, “By the end of the week, I felt great. I understood what they meant by minimally invasive!” ●



Dr. Right

For a referral to an obstetrician/gynecologist on the medical staff at Baylor, call **1-800-4BAYLOR** or visit **BaylorHealth.com/physicianfinder**.

CELEBRATING WOMEN

The 10th annual Celebrating Women luncheon to benefit breast cancer research, outreach and expanded technology will be Oct. 22 at the Hilton Anatole Hotel in Dallas.

New York Times best-selling author Kelly Corrigan will be the headline speaker. Her book, *The Middle Place*, addresses her treatment for breast cancer at the same time her father was diagnosed with late-stage bladder cancer.

For more information, contact Kali Bailey at **214-820-2705** or **Kali.Bailey@BaylorHealth.edu**.

Get 'Em While They're Young

Creating heart-healthy habits that last a lifetime

We teach our kids to “have heart.” We nurse them through broken hearts. But what can do to actually help their hearts? Plenty.

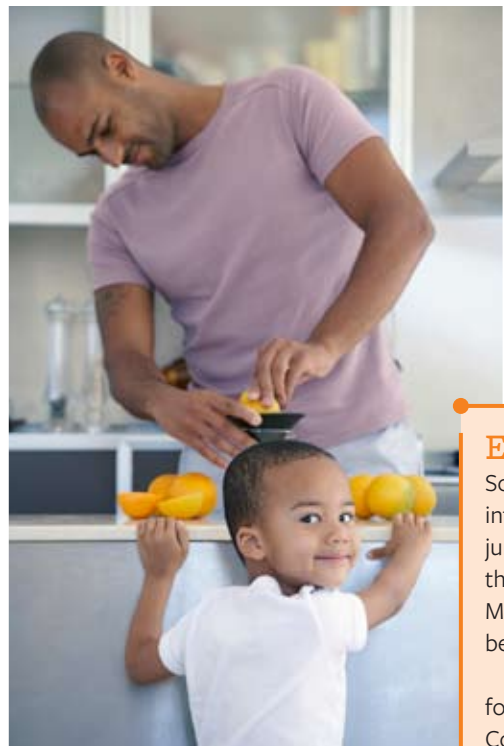
In fact, you can establish heart-healthy habits now that last long into adulthood. Memorizing these five F's can help.

FAT AND FIBER “These are the front-lines of defense to reduce risk for heart disease,” says Stephanie Dean, R.D., dietitian at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas. Fiber-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains help control cholesterol.

Limiting trans fats and saturated fats early also reduces risk. A recent study in the journal *Hypertension* found lower blood pressure in adolescents who had been on a low-fat diet since infancy.

FOOD LABELS Foster nutrition savvy at a young age by making food label reading a habit. “Do this now, so your child won't end up as a 58-year-old sitting in a dietitian's office, wondering how to get his cholesterol down,” Dean says. See mypyramid.gov for games and ideas.

FITNESS Emphasize exercise, making it frequent and fun. Not only will exercise control cholesterol, blood pressure and obesity, but when your children leave the nest, they'll also be armed with a natural antidote to combat the stress that can accompany college life.



FIRST IMPRESSION “Recognize the positive force you are for your child,” Dean says. When they are young—and curious—use a preventive, positive focus to explain your lifestyle choices. For example, instead of explaining your exercise as a necessary chore to lose weight, tell your kids you're exercising to strengthen your heart.

FAST-ACTING Once your children have the inside track to heart health, equip them to be fast-acting in a heart emergency. Call 1-800-4BAYLOR to find a CPR class near you. ● *By Laurie Davies*

Early Intervention

Some infants need Baylor neonatal intensive care units (NICU) to get a jump-start on a healthy life. Such was the case for Carson Hadnot, born in March 2008 with his “heart barely beating,” says his mom Aime Hadnot.

Carson was Baylor's first candidate for a technology called Total Body Cooling. A cooling blanket lowers body temperature, protecting brain cells from harmful chemicals created by a lack of oxygen at birth. “We kept Carson's brain cooled until those chemicals were gone from the blood,” says Craig Shoemaker, M.D., medical director of neonatology for Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas.

Today, Carson is a happily developing toddler who shows just some signs of motor delay and hearing loss. “He beat so many odds. What's a little hearing loss?” Hadnot says.

Carson's Story

Read more about Carson's story and the innovative treatment that helped save his life at BaylorHealth.com/mystory.

A Great Start

For a referral to a pediatrician on the medical staff at Baylor, call 1-800-4BAYLOR or visit BaylorHealth.com/physicianfinder.

The Grim Sleeper

Tired all day after sleeping all night? You may need a sleep study

Jesse Vasquez, 43, of Cedar Hill, was so fatigued he would fall asleep three minutes into a conversation, and every time he watched TV. “My wife told me, ‘Something’s wrong, Jesse, you’re sleeping all day,’” he says.

A doctor recommended a sleep study, and while watching a video prior to the study he crashed to the floor, asleep. During the study, Jesse was aware of waking up four times, but the study showed he stirred many more times than that. Sleep apnea—interrupted breathing—was waking him repeatedly each night, causing the daytime fatigue.

His doctor prescribed a machine to reduce the nighttime breathing interruptions. Now, he can sleep through the night and stay awake during the day. He’s also lost 20 pounds, cutting out the daytime snacks he used to eat to bolster his energy during the day.

For Karen DeLavan, of Richardson, symptoms were more subtle. Following a surgical procedure, one of the nurses told her she had stopped breathing several times in just a couple of minutes. After a sleep study, she was diagnosed with sleep apnea and started using a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine to help keep her airway open during the night.

“I hadn’t had a full night’s sleep in years, but I was able to blame being tired on a lot of different

things—getting old or being stressed or having too much going on. Within a week of getting the CPAP I could see a huge difference—I had more energy and was feeling better,” she says.

Sleep studies are used when sleep apnea, narcolepsy or abnormal sleep behaviors are suspected, says Sunil Mathews, M.D., medical director for the sleep lab at Baylor Medical Center at Irving. They usually are not recommended for insomnia. “It’s a setting similar to a hotel room. People can sleep in a position that’s comfortable for them, during normal sleep hours,” says Stephanie Snowden, sleep center supervisor for Baylor Irving.

During the study, technicians monitor heart rate, oxygen levels, brain waves, muscle tension and breathing patterns, explains Raul Noriega, manager of the sleep disorders center at Baylor Regional Medical Center at Grapevine.

Sleep apnea is the most common diagnosis, affecting more than 12 million Americans. Most people find relief with a CPAP machine, says David Luterman, M.D., a sleep specialist on the medical staff at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. For others, oral appliances or surgery can help. ● *By Stephanie Thurrott*

Check Your Sleep Savvy

To take a quiz about sleep disorders, visit **BaylorHealth.com/mystory**. For a referral to a sleep specialist on the medical staff at Baylor, call **1-800-4BAYLOR** or visit **BaylorHealth.com/physicianfinder**.



Sleep apnea affects more than **12 million** Americans.



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Defining Quality

Baylor doesn't need to brag about its excellence. Numerous awards and recognitions do the job nicely

Most dictionary definitions of the word “quality” refer to “excellence.” And when it comes to defining the level of quality that exists across the entire Baylor Health Care System, there's certainly no shortage of excellence.

Baylor and its hospitals have been honored countless times for outstanding clinical expertise, care and leadership.

“One of the reasons Baylor is a very special place is our unwavering commitment to our vision to be trusted as the best place to give and receive safe, quality, compassionate care,” says Joel Allison, President and CEO of Baylor Health Care System.

Among the most notable awards is the 2008 *U.S. News & World Report* Rankings, which listed Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas among the nation's top 50 hospitals—for the 16th consecutive year—in seven out of 16 specialty areas. In addition, Baylor Institute for Rehabilitation ranked 13th among the nation's top rehabilitation facilities.

Baylor also received the National Quality Healthcare Award from the National Quality Forum in 2008. In addition, Baylor earned the 2008 VHA Leadership Award for Clinical Excellence at several of its locations. The Baylor Jack and Jane Hamilton Heart and Vascular Hospital, Baylor Medical Center at Garland, Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie and Baylor Specialty Hospital were all recognized for superior patient safety and clinical expertise.

Other honors earned by Baylor hospitals include:

- **BAYLOR REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER AT GRAPEVINE** Texas Award for Performance Excellence, in recognition of best practices including process improvement and customer focus
- **BAYLOR MEDICAL CENTER AT IRVING** Named a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology
- **BAYLOR ALL SAINTS MEDICAL CENTER AT FORT WORTH** American Diabetes Association recognition for its

Diabetes Education Center, an honor also received by six other Baylor entities

- **BAYLOR REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER AT PLANO** American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence

This is just a small sampling of the local and national honors bestowed on Baylor. These recognitions are a source of pride for the people of Baylor—and motivate them to maintain their pursuit of excellence, each and every day.

“I am so proud of the entire Baylor health care team,” says Allison. “We work continuously to come up with clinical processes, practices and technologies to enhance the health care we provide, while never forgetting that the patient is at the center of all we do.” ● *By Amy Lynn Smith*



And the Award Goes To ...

To see a complete listing of the awards and accreditations received across Baylor Health Care System, visit BaylorHealth.com/awards.



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