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## **Single-Incision Robotic Gallbladder Removal Completed by Covenant HealthCare Surgical Team.**

*First in the Great Lakes Bay Region and Among the First 40 Sites in the Nation*

SAGINAW, MI - On Tuesday, February 28, 2012 a surgical team at Covenant HealthCare completed the first single-incision robotic assisted surgery to remove a gallbladder in the Great Lakes Bay Region, and the only in Michigan north of Detroit. The team was lead by American College of Surgeons fellow Sujal Patel, MD.

According to Intuitive Surgical, Inc., the company that manufactures the da Vinci, Covenant is among the first 40 hospitals across the nation to achieve this accomplishment. Surgeons who perform these types of surgeries must have hours of practice and specialized training to use the devices.

During a minimally invasive surgery using the da Vinci system, the robotic arms are attached to surgical equipment. These arms are precisely controlled by the surgeon who is seated at a console several feet away from the patient. Using the console, the surgeon is able to visualize the patient and the procedure via a high-definition 3-D image.

As surgery begins, the robotic arms enter through a single-incision in the body, about 1 inch in diameter. In the case of a gallbladder removal, the incision is made at the patient's belly button. This method provides various patient benefits including minimal scarring, less bleeding, quicker recovery times and a shorter stay in the hospital.

Two patients had gallbladder removals using this technique on February 28, 2012. The first case lasted 44 minutes; counting from the time Dr. Patel sat down at the console to the time he stepped away. Console time for the second case lasted just 28 minutes.

Dr. Patel says, "I have been doing single incision laparoscopic surgery without a robot for the last 2 years and found the da Vinci robot has made this procedure much easier to perform. It is great that Covenant has invested into the program and provided great support; as we are the third center offering this technique in the North Central region and the only one outside of Detroit and Chicago."

The team performed the surgery using the newest da Vinci robot, the Intuitive da Vinci Si. This model is complete with a dual-console capability to support training and collaboration during surgery. Covenant is now home to two da Vinci robots, and is the only hospital in the area with Si Dual Console capabilities.

Since October of 2009, physicians have performed more than 1,200 robotic procedures at Covenant.

These robots are utilized for various types of procedures including gynecology, oncology, urology, thoracic, advanced laparoscopic, general surgeries, but the list continues to grow.

Looking ahead Dr. Patel says, "I feel that the future of minimally invasive surgery includes the utilization of the robot and I feel privileged to be able to offer this alternative minimally invasive option to our patients."

Interview opportunities are available, please call for arrangements.

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