Inova Health System, a leader in the Washington metro area in robotic-assisted minimally invasive surgery, has added two new latest generation da Vinci® Robotic Surgical Systems to serve patients in Northern Virginia.

Specially trained surgeons at Inova Fairfax Hospital and Inova Loudoun Hospital use the da Vinci to perform minimally invasive surgery, primarily to treat prostate cancer and a variety of urologic and gynecologic conditions.

The da Vinci system integrates high-definition 3-D endoscopy and state-of-the-art robotic technology to allow surgeons greater dexterity and precision. During da Vinci procedures, the surgeon sits at a console a few feet away from the patient and remotely manipulates the robot’s surgical instruments.

Inova’s da Vinci prostatectomy program (the removal of the...
Eating a Mediterranean diet, which emphasizes fruits, vegetables, legumes and healthy fats, and increasing physical activity levels, can reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease, according to a new study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Study participants who ate well and exercised had a 60 percent reduction in the risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease compared with those who didn’t do either of these things.

Lifting weights can help prevent flare-ups of lymphedema, a painful swelling of the arm that often occurs after breast cancer surgery, new research published in the New England Journal of Medicine shows. The finding runs counter to what women have been told for years — that they should avoid stressing the arm during strength training or other exercise.

Flu season occurs every year. But this year is different. You will need to get two different sets of flu shots — one for the seasonal flu and up to two for the new H1N1 virus. The flu is not just a bad cold. Each year, more than 200,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized because of seasonal flu, while about 36,000 people die from it. An annual flu vaccination can be up to 90 percent effective in protecting against this serious disease.

The grant will help fund after-school programs at 15 Fairfax County elementary and middle schools for the 2009-2010 school year. The goal of the program is to increase awareness of the dangers of tobacco use and to help youth develop the skills to resist peer pressure to experiment with tobacco. The curriculum offered, Life Skills Training, is an evidence-based, substance-use-prevention program.

Inova HealthSource health educators will teach the elementary-school program (eight sessions) and the middle-school program (15 sessions) beginning Oct. 15. Sessions will last about 45 minutes and include education on a health- or wellness-related topic, and discussion and activities centered around that session’s topic.

Inova recently added two top-of-the-line da Vinci Robotic Surgical Systems at Inova Fairfax and Inova Loudoun hospitals.

prostate to treat cancer) is the largest program in Northern Virginia and is the only prostatectomy program in the Washington, DC area to achieve a five-star rating from HealthGrades®, an independent company that rates the quality of clinical outcomes and patient experience in 26 different areas.

Inova Plus

For more information about Inova’s da Vinci program, visit inova.org/davinci.

For more information about Inova Plus, visit inova.org/flu.

WEIGHT LIFTING CAN EASE LYMPHEDEMA SYMPTOMS

Lifting weights can help prevent flare-ups of lymphedema, a painful swelling of the arm that often occurs after breast cancer surgery, new research published in the New England Journal of Medicine shows. The finding runs counter to what women have been told for years — that they should avoid stressing the arm during strength training or other exercise.
In PURSUIT of EXCELLENCE

Today, a young mother in Virginia will discover that her fainting spells are tied to a heart beating out of rhythm.

Someone else will decide it’s finally time for hip replacement surgery after years of pain. Another will want help navigating the uncertainties of a suspicious lump in their breast.

All have important choices to make. And, they are doing their homework. A 2008 study by the Center for Studying Health System Change reported that by 2007 more than 70 million consumers had sought health information on the Internet, including information to help them understand their conditions and about the quality of healthcare providers.
Good News
This consumer trend is good news for Inova Health System, which stands out in the Washington, DC, metro region for its commitment to highest-quality medicine and patient outcomes.

Such achievements, which are the result of forging strong partnerships with physicians, nurses, clinical staff and employees, ultimately create the most positive experience and outcomes for patients. They also influence decisions made by the best doctors about where they want to practice.

Physicians Choose What's Best for Patients
“Physicians have choices,” says Bob Fildes, MD, Medical Director for Specialty Clinics for Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children. “What attracts the best physicians in the region to Inova is the depth and breadth of services that only a sophisticated system of care can offer, as well as a strong commitment to quality, best practices and superior outcomes for patients.”

Board-certified in pediatrics and nephrology, Dr. Fildes sees benefits to having Northern Virginia’s only children’s hospital as part of a system that enables seamless access to a wide range of medical specialties.

“The Inova system gives families and patients easy access to some of the region’s finest and most qualified doctors, nurses and other caregivers,” Dr. Fildes says. “I like the fact that a patient can enter any Inova facility and be assured that they’ll get care they need, when they need it.”

Ray Wertheim, MD, Chairman of the Obstetrics and Gynecology program at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, agrees.

“What attracts the best physicians in the region to Inova is the depth and breadth of services that only a sophisticated system of care can offer.”

BOB FILDES, MD

PHOTOS: ANNE DOYLE
Dr. Wertheim is a recognized clinical leader in highly specialized and innovative minimally invasive surgical procedures, such as laparoscopic hysterectomies. In May 2009, Inova Fair Oaks Hospital hosted a comprehensive training program for physicians on the procedure, featuring speakers from Duke University, the Medical College of Virginia and other notable programs.

“I have worked through the years in many different hospitals, and physicians at Inova are some of the most collegial and supportive of any place I’ve worked,” he says. “It truly enhances a patient’s experience and quality outcomes when physicians are committed to each other, with the patient at the center of that collaboration.”

A Different Kind of Research

Inova’s commitment to education and research is one of the distinguishing characteristics of its commitment to quality. Though academic-based hospitals often focus on long-term, theoretical research, Inova’s model seeks to more quickly translate positive research findings to treatment options.

“Inova’s approach has the same high academic standards, but the patient could realize the positive outcomes of our research more quickly and in a ‘real world’ practice setting,” says Zobair Younossi, MD, Inova’s Executive Director of Research. “We have strong partnerships with institutions like George Mason University and Virginia Commonwealth University that support our model.”
Keith Sterling, MD, Medical Director of Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology at Inova Alexandria Hospital, says that Inova’s ongoing commitment to investing in state-of-the-art technology is one reason he chose to practice at Inova. Interventional radiologists are highly specialized physicians who use their unique skills to perform minimally invasive, targeted treatments that use a delicate array of instruments to address a range of issues, from removal of blood clots to precise delivery of radiation or chemotherapy directly to tumor sites.

“I was drawn to practice at Inova Alexandria Hospital because its interventional radiology department is nationally and internationally known,” he says. “Inova invests in the resources, the technology and the clinical support services required for high-quality programs and outcomes.”

**One of the Few**

Margaret Bell, MD, works in the highly specialized field of cardiac electrophysiology. She practices at Inova Fairfax Hospital, providing advanced cardiac treatment options for children and adults. Cardiac electrophysiology is the science of diagnosing and treating electrical activities and rhythms of the heart, often using minimally invasive surgical technology.

“One of the things that drew me to Inova is the support I received for the unique medical work that I do, particularly with children,” she says. “Inova provides the things we need to achieve the best patient outcomes.”
“Community investment enhances opportunities for physicians to do their best work.”

MARTHA CALIHAN, MD

That type of support, says Dr. Bell, has helped physicians at Inova Fairfax Hospital build one of the few medical programs in the country to offer patients advancements like new, wireless cardiac monitoring implants that improve identification of abnormal heart rhythms.

A Two-Way Partnership

As a not-for-profit healthcare system, another significant element of quality for Inova involves the hundreds of ways it connects care to the community. Patients and loved ones who have directly benefited from Inova’s services often show their gratitude through donations of time and money. Such contributions enable the Inova Health System Foundation to support a variety of innovative programs and advanced medical services.

“Physicians appreciate the not-for-profit mission of Inova and the philanthropic, community-focused opportunities it creates,” says Martha Calihan, MD, a family medicine practitioner and Vice Chair of Inova Loudoun Hospital’s Board of Directors. “Community investment enhances opportunities for physicians to do their best work. You can walk through our hospital to the Mary Elizabeth Miller Cancer Center or the Schaufeld Family Heart Center and, on the wall, see the names of community members who believe in what we do. That type of community commitment inspires excellence in all of us.”

“One of the things that drew me to Inova is the support I received for the unique medical work that I do, particularly with children.”

MARGARET BELL, MD

INNOVA PLUS

To learn more about Inova’s achievements in quality medical care, visit us online.
inova.org/awards

To support the work of Inova Health System, contact Sarah Burdi 703-289-2008 inova.org/foundation
What does an orthopedic oncologist do?
An orthopedic oncologist is trained to treat tumors of the bones and soft tissues. Because these conditions affect both children and adults, we treat a wide range of ages.

After orthopedic residency, we complete two additional years of training. We have extensive experience analyzing X-rays and MRIs of tumors of the bones and muscles. We are often required to remove large tumors involving bones and muscles, and use specialized techniques and internal prostheses to reconstruct the skeleton and restore function.

So your area of expertise is really a specialized field?
Oh, yes. There are only 100 to 200 of us in the whole country.

How does your specialty fit into the spectrum of Inova’s cancer services?
My colleagues and I benefit greatly by having other talented cancer specialists at Inova we collaborate with, just as we benefit from the breadth and depth of clinical services available in the Inova system. It really helps us take the best care of our patients.

How common are these conditions?
Malignant tumors that start in the bones — bone sarcomas — are actually rare. Malignant soft-tissue tumors — soft-tissue sarcomas — are less rare, but still uncommon. On the other hand, there are many benign tumors of the bones and muscles that require our diagnostic and treatment expertise. Often, our greatest service involves examining a patient and their imaging studies, and reassuring them that their condition is benign.

For more complex patients, we work as a team with radiologists, pathologists and other oncologists to select the best treatment.

Read more of Dr. Wodajo’s interview and learn more about Inova’s Musculoskeletal Tumor Program online.
inova.org/msk
In June 2008, Jessica Bonaiuto found a lump in her breast during a routine self exam. The busy Fairfax mother and career woman initially thought it was nothing, but within a matter of days the innocuous lump began to weigh more and more on her mind. To ease her worries, Bonaiuto decided to go in for a mammogram. “They saw the results and said, ‘It doesn’t look good,’” she remembers. “The following week I had the biopsy.”

Shortly after, she got the news no woman wants to hear: The lump that she thought — that she hoped — was nothing turned out to be malignant. “I felt pure shock, and then fear,” says Bonaiuto. “What was going to happen to my family? What was going to happen to me?”

From that point on, Bonaiuto began counting what she feared could be her “lasts” — the last time she would greet her son at school … the last Fourth of July she would spend with her family … her last sunny summer day.

Navigating New Terrain
Bonaiuto was soon introduced to Doreen Grzelak, RN, a breast care navigator at the Inova Breast Care Institute at Inova Fairfax Hospital. Grzelak helped Bonaiuto understand and digest all the new technical and clinical terminology she would come to hear over the next several months, helping her navigate this new terrain.

“Doreen was my first entrée into Inova. She was great,” says Bonaiuto. “She always called me when I had appointments, to make sure I understood the information. She really spelled it out for me.”

Chemotherapy sessions started that summer and Bonaiuto said she went through “chemo depression.” To help her cope with her eight sessions, she started a “chemo countdown.” Her last chemotherapy session ended Thanksgiving week. “We had a lot to be thankful for,” Bonaiuto remembers. “My husband Dominic made Thanksgiving dinner. I still can’t believe we survived as well as we did.”

An Unparalleled Program
Looking back on this tough time, Bonaiuto says Inova’s Life with Cancer® program was key in helping her maintain her emotional and psychological well-being. “Everyone I met along the way, including Doreen, pointed me to Life with Cancer,” she says.

Established in 1986, Inova’s Life with Cancer helps people face the challenges that accompany a cancer diagnosis, providing information, education and support to those
affected by the disease. The pro-
gram — one of only several in the
country that offer a similar scope of
services — is free for all patients,
regardless of where they’re treated,
and employs full-time, oncology-
certified nurses and oncology
counselors who provide individual-
ized cancer diagnosis and treatment
information in English and Spanish.

Already a bulwark of the Northern
Virginia community, Life with
Cancer is moving toward becoming
a national resource as it makes more
of its resources and programs avail-
able online, and as its staff conducts
presentations at national conferences
on how other organizations can
apply the Life with Cancer model
to their communities.

Gordon Hay, the founding Direc-
tor of the program, says the depth
and range of expertise at Life with
Cancer is unparalleled. “The staff
here focuses on the total needs of
the patient — going beyond medical
treatment to address the psychologi-
cal and social needs created by the
disease,” he explains. “They extend
this care to the patient’s family and
continued ›
friends as well, all as part of Inova’s commitment to our community. It’s so rewarding to see all the ways we’re able to help people affected by this disease by improving their quality of life.”

**Calming the Anxieties**

Micheline Toussaint, LCSW, Bonaiuto’s oncology counselor, understands the shock and disorientation people go through when touched by cancer. “Getting a cancer diagnosis can be a traumatic experience,” says Toussaint, who has a background in mental health counseling and hospice care. “My job is to both listen to the fears, and to calm people’s anxieties enough to help them remember their strengths, their coping skills. People are a lot stronger than they think they are. This is just completely new terrain.”

Toussaint remembers that when Bonaiuto found herself dealing with breast cancer, “She was just frozen. Jessica’s a real mover and a shaker. But suddenly she was in a foreign land. Our work together often focused on remembering ways she had gotten through other challenging times in her life, and remembering the many strengths that she has.”

“The people at Life with Cancer were so empathetic, kind and understanding,” says Bonaiuto. “I felt very safe. They were there to help me and my family get through this.”

**A Warm, Welcoming Environment**

To help meet growing community demand for its services, in April Life with Cancer opened the doors to its Dewberry Life with Cancer Family Center, also known as Carolyn’s House.

The new, 16,000-square-foot home — the largest of its kind in the nation — provides a warm, welcoming environment to those affected by cancer, as well as a host of offerings, including a medical library, eight private and group counseling rooms, art-therapy studios for children and adults, a large exercise room for classes specifically designed for cancer patients, and a “reflection garden” that provides a quiet, natural environment to help with coping and comfort.

“The house is gorgeous,” says Bonaiuto. “It’s an unbelievable resource for patients and their families — you feel at home, right away.”

The Family Center was funded by philanthropic donations from many community sources: corporations, foundations, Life with Cancer board members, and patients and their loved ones. One family that has been particularly instrumental in helping Life with Cancer both philanthropically as well as with day-to-day leadership is the Peterson Family.

**Mainstay of the Program**

Carolyn Peterson began supporting Life with Cancer more than 20 years ago. The two-time cancer survivor says her experiences “magnified the need for the emotional and educational support that is the mainstay of Life with Cancer.”
As Life with Cancer’s founding board chairman, Peterson says that Life with Cancer has exceeded all her expectations. Now, a second-generation Peterson — Lauren Peterson Fellows — has stepped in to lead fundraising efforts, enabling the program to continue its commitment of serving the community and providing its services free of charge.

“Those of us blessed with good fortune must give back to our communities. The Peterson family considers Life with Cancer its most cherished commitment,” Carolyn Peterson says. “The Family Center is the first step in the fulfillment of our dreams and goals. Even though initial construction is complete, more work remains to be done. Inova helps cover some of the Center’s operating costs, but we need additional community support to cover other costs, including the debt we took on to build this one-of-a-kind resource. Community members who contribute to this cause will help us offer the benefits of our programs to even more people living with cancer.”

A Balanced Approach
Kirsten Edmiston, MD, Medical Director of Inova Cancer Services, removed Bonaiuto’s tumor in July 2008. Though Inova’s clinical services are world-class — within the last year, for example, three Inova hospitals have earned the Outstanding Achievement Award from the American College of Surgeons’ Commission on Cancer — Dr. Edmiston says that Life with Cancer provides a tremendous complement to the clinical care that Inova provides.

“Some healthcare providers focus only on the clinical side of the equation,” says Dr. Edmiston. “The reality is, cancer affects not only the patient’s physical health, but also their emotional health and the health of their family. It’s an integral part of the care we offer and it helps place Inova Cancer Services among the best in the country.”

Bonaiuto couldn’t agree more. After her chemotherapy, she successfully completed a round of radiation therapy, and learned during her first annual visit that she was still cancer-free. Thoughts about “lasts” have turned back into “firsts” — she’s looking forward to enjoying life and happily counting each new day.
Pam O’Bryant has never been one to live life from the sidelines. Soccer, jogging, yoga, weightlifting — even a marathon in 2000. But over the years, the 46-year-old Northern Virginia resident became increasingly frustrated as chronic hip pain interfered with daily activities and the athletic activities she enjoyed. Years of therapy failed to bring relief and choosing hip replacement surgery loomed large as an option.

“I refused to be confined to the couch,” O’Bryant says. “So I did some research and found out about the anterior hip replacement approach.”

A Faster Recovery Time
O’Bryant was encouraged by what she learned about the minimally invasive surgical procedure, in which approaching the hip from the front of the leg allows less disturbance of muscle as compared to traditional hip replacements, which are performed from the side or the back of the leg. “It just made sense for me,” she says. “Cutting less muscle means faster recovery time.”

She also was encouraged by the fact that Inova is recognized nationally as a leader in orthopedics and minimally invasive surgery. More than 160 physicians perform nearly 4,000 joint replacements and advanced orthopedic surgical procedures each year at Inova, more than any other healthcare provider in the Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C., metro area.

In making her choice for anterior hip replacement, she consulted with William Hamilton, MD, at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, home to one of only four programs in Virginia to receive a Gold Seal for orthopedic excellence from The Joint Commission, the independent accrediting agency that oversees more than 16,000 healthcare organizations and programs in the U.S. “He explained the process thoroughly, and I felt confident that this was the way to go,” she remembers.

Less Trauma
Approaching the hip from the front of the leg allows the surgeon to go in between the muscles, inserting the implant without disturbing or cutting them. “Our goal with the anterior approach is to replace the hip with less trauma to the body, less post-operative pain, fewer complications such as dislocation, and more normal hip function after surgery as a result,” Dr. Hamilton explains.

Dr. Hamilton uses a specially designed Hana table to position the leg correctly during surgery. He and his team underwent extensive training to develop specialized expertise in the approach, and are achieving very positive results and outcomes for their patients. “My patients certainly seem to have a much faster return to function,” Dr. Hamilton says. “Many go home the day after surgery, and most are walking without a cane within a couple of weeks.”

Anthony Aram, MD, who uses a modified anterior approach at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, agrees. “Patients
love the approach in terms of how they feel after surgery,” Dr. Aram says. “They don’t have the restrictions that they would with other hip replacement approaches, because the risk of dislocation is significantly reduced.”

The anterior approach also enables surgeons to use Inova’s advanced computer-assisted surgical navigation systems more effectively, which helps them place the implant in the optimal position.

“I Feel Like I Can Do Anything”

O’Bryant’s anterior hip replacement surgery was May 28, 2009, and that night she got out of bed and took steps. “I was discharged from the hospital the day after surgery. There are 16 steps up to my apartment door, and I walked right up them.”

Within three weeks, Pam was back at work, driving and walking distances of up to one mile. She is working her way back up to regular routines of yoga and weightlifting, and is even planning her training for a half-marathon or triathlon. And, she’s added a new sport — kayaking — since her hip surgery. “I feel like I can do anything,” she says.

HIP FACTOR

During an anterior approach to hip replacement surgery, the patient is positioned to allow surgeons access to the hip joint through a small single incision in the upper thigh (left). The surgeon then works in the natural interval between muscles (right), leaving the muscles undisturbed. Because there is less trauma to the area, patients recover more quickly and have fewer activity restrictions.
A dedicated U.S. intelligence officer, who knew the value of service, chose to show his appreciation for compassionate hospital employees through a substantial bequest to Inova.

A longtime federal employee, who cherished her independence, decided to create scholarships for the Inova professionals who provide medical care at home for patients with chronic illnesses.

A career employee on Capitol Hill, who knew first-hand the challenges of premature birth and heart disease, asked that the money she donated be used to bring hope to vulnerable newborns and cardiovascular patients at Inova.

These are just a few of the generous people who have brought a *Legacy of Life* to Inova through their gifts.

Making Inova a beneficiary of your will can be the ultimate means of saying “thank you” to the physicians and nurses who cared for you or a loved one. It can also be a powerful means of giving life and health to others — for generations to come.

For more information about making a legacy gift through your will, visit [inova.org/legacy](http://inova.org/legacy) and click on “Gifts Anyone Can Afford.”

For a confidential conversation about including Inova in your will or for more information, call 703-289-2072 or e-mail foundation@inova.org.

Inova Health system is a not-for-profit healthcare system.