

[MUSIC PLAYING]

BRIAN HOPKINS: One of the things that I'm very interested in is kidney cancer and in particular new technologies, such as robotic partial nephrectomy. When I started in 2000, we dealt with kidney tumors primarily by removing the entire kidney, and often through a large incision sometimes with going through the chest and the abdomen and removing a rib in the process of that, which is a big surgery obviously and patients take a long time to recover. The outcomes were great, but patients paid the price for that type of big incision.

Nowadays what we've found is that many of these kidney tumors not only can be removed laparoscopically with small incisions, but we can actually remove only part of the kidney, including the tumor, and not the entire kidney itself. We can actually do this minimally invasively with a robotic platform. And the reason why we use a robotic platform is because we need to remove the tumor and then repair the defect, and the robotic platform allows us to sew very fast and close that defect. And that's important because there's a lot of blood flow to the kidney and we have to necessarily clamp the artery feeding the kidney. And when we do that we have a limited amount of time to work.

And as a result, we have to be very efficient in what we're doing and safe. And so the robotic platform allows us to close that defect up in a very hemostatic fashion so that there is no bleeding and we can approach even the most complicated tumors, whether they're deep in the kidney or sitting on the surface of the kidney. We can do things now with that technology that we never dreamed possible, that we always thought would have to be done open. So that's really exciting.

I think patients see the benefit of that, because typically patients will go home the next day after surgery, which was unheard of when I started practice. And the most important thing is not just the recovery, but the cancer outcomes are equivalent. There is no difference. So patients benefit in terms of getting back to work, having less pain, and less blood loss.

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