



MISSION
HOSPITALS

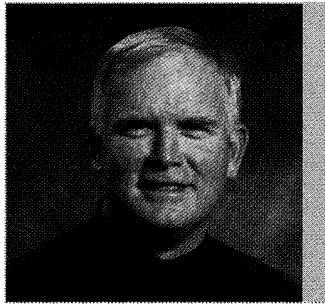
Ask the doctor

Q I've been diagnosed with stage 1 prostate cancer and my physician recommends I have a radical prostatectomy. Are there ways to have my prostate removed without affecting my sexual function or continence?

A No surgeon can promise that you won't have after-effects from this or any other surgery.

Several factors make prostatectomy difficult. The surgeon is working close to the nerve bundles that affect erectile function. In addition, the surgeon must cut and reattach the urethra, the tube that goes through the prostate gland as it carries urine from the bladder. So, you can see why there is risk of disturbing both sexual and urinary functions.

A radical prostatectomy can be performed through one long abdominal incision (retropubic), through an incision in the perineum (perineal), or with a laparoscope using several small puncture sites (laparoscopic). There are many advantages to laparoscopic prostatectomy. It gives the surgeon a microscopic view of the surgery field, which is helpful in avoiding nerve bundles and sparing healthy tissue. There is usually less pain and less chance of blood loss. The recovery time is shorter. You may be able to go home the next day. The catheter may be out in week,



Kenny L. Simpkins, M.D.
Director of Urology Service Line

instead of two to four. These factors make laparoscopic surgery a good option for men who cannot be away from work for very long.

It's important to remember, however, that laparoscopic surgery alone does not significantly reduce the chances of the side effects that concern you. Because this surgery is so demanding and precise, the skill of the individual surgeon is especially important. For this reason, I encourage you to choose a urological surgeon who practices at a

hospital that specializes in prostate treatment. For example, at Mission we have an operating room and surgery staff dedicated to urological surgery.

Even though you cannot be guaranteed of success in the preservation of erectile function and continence, the success rates today are exceptionally good for maintaining acceptable continence, and—depending on your age—are as high as 50 to 75 percent for erectile function.

Kenny L. Simpkins, M.D., is a urologist with Victoria Urology Associates. He serves as the Medical Staff Leader for Mission's Urology Service Line. Call his practice at:

Asheville (828) 254-8883

Brevard (828) 884-3699

Marion (828) 652-8109



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