

Bigger Is Not Always Better

Riverview Medical Center Minimally invasive surgery at Riverview offers patients a safe option with great results.



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AS A HIGH SCHOOL BIOLOGY TEACHER AND athletics coach, Jennamarie DeVito's free time is limited. The 31-year-old Red Bank resident coaches volleyball and the swim team, yet still finds time to keep herself in shape by running or doing CrossFit. But a health problem threatened to slow her down.

"For over a year, I had severe abdominal pain," Jennamarie says. "It would only last temporarily and then go away, but it was severe enough that I was constantly in and out of the Emergency Department."

Choosing the Right Option for Relief

After one of her most recent episodes, Jennamarie went to her gastroenterologist for a series of tests, including an abdominal ultrasound and hepatobiliary (HIDA) scan. A HIDA scan is a diagnostic procedure used to diagnose problems of the gallbladder, liver, and bile ducts. Her test results revealed her gallbladder was less than 5 percent functional, while a normal value is greater than 35 percent. Although she was not keen on the idea of surgery, Jennamarie knew the only way she would be pain-free would be to have her gallbladder removed.

She chose to have the surgery at the new Center for Robotic Surgery at Riverview Medical Center. "I asked my doctor for a highly recommended surgeon in the area, preferably at Riverview," Jennamarie says. "I met with Dr. Dupree, and he recommended robotic surgery. I did some research and liked the option because it was new technology and was the least invasive possibility."

Confident in her research, Jennamarie scheduled her surgery with **David Dupree, M.D.**, a surgeon at Riverview who is trained in robotic surgery.

"Robotically assisted surgery uses a surgical robot to perform complex operations, without the need for large incisions," Dr. Dupree says. "It provides patients with a quicker recovery time as well as reduced postoperative pain, resulting in minimal incisions and scarring."

On the Mend — and on the Go

Jennamarie arrived at Riverview for her surgery at 6:00 a.m. on October 20, 2013, and was home by noon — pleased with her experience from start to finish.

"I had no pain. My abs were a little sore, but it felt like the soreness associated with a workout rather than surgery," Jennamarie says. "Dr. Dupree was outstanding. He has a great personality, and he was very confident. Most important, though, he understood how important it was to me to get back to my daily routine. I went in for my surgery Tuesday and was back to work Monday."

by Caitlin Coyle



Jennamarie DeVito is a swimming coach at Red Bank Regional in Red Bank. The 31-year-old competes in triathlons and half marathons, and is currently training for a half iron man.

Make a Speedy Recovery



Robotically assisted surgery is revolutionizing the way physicians operate on patients with certain colorectal, gynecologic, urologic, and general conditions. To learn how our expert surgeons at Meridian Centers for Robotic Surgery work together to provide patients with faster recovery times and improved outcomes, visit MeridianHealth.com/RoboticSurgery.