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## News Release

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### **The da Vinci® Robotic-Assisted Surgery System at Baptist Medical Center Downtown to Be Used on 100<sup>th</sup> Patient**

#### ***System Is Used for Minimally Invasive Pediatric and Adult Urology, Gynecology and Pediatric General Surgical Procedures***

*Jacksonville, Florida, May 23, 2006* – Last June, Baptist Health installed a new minimally invasive method to treat adult and pediatric patients: robotic-assisted surgery. Since then, surgical specialists at Baptist Medical Center Downtown have performed nearly 100 surgeries using the da Vinci® Surgical System, ranging from laparoscopic hysterectomy and radical prostatectomy (removal of the prostate) to pediatric procedures such as pyeloplasty (an operation to remove a congenital blockage in the tube leading from one of the kidneys to the bladder that affects urine flow). The 100<sup>th</sup> procedure, a pyeloplasty, is scheduled for June 6, 2006, on a pediatric patient.

Previously, all surgeries were performed “open,” where an incision was made in the body large enough for the surgeon to plainly see – and insert his or her hands into – the surgical field. The large incisions that open surgery required caused pain, increased risk of infection, and extended recovery time.

With the advent of minimally invasive surgery, however, surgeons began practicing surgery in a new way, developing better and better ways to perform the same procedures using smaller incisions. One major benefit of this advance was much quicker patient recovery.

Now, the da Vinci® system allows surgeons three-dimensional visualization, enhanced dexterity, and better precision and control. The system allows a surgeon’s hand movements to be scaled, filtered and translated into precise movements of micro-instruments within the operative site.

The 100<sup>th</sup> patient’s surgeon, pediatric urologist Michael Erhard, MD, primarily uses the da Vinci® to correct congenital urologic abnormalities. “With the da Vinci® system, I am able to work in a small, confining space when performing suturing maneuvers,” says Erhard, who serves as medical director of the Minimally Invasive Program at Wolfson Children’s Hospital. “This precision may decrease post-operative urinary leakage and often allows a quicker discharge home for the patient.”

Urologist Apoorva Vashi, MD, agrees. “The robot is indispensable in cases that require a lot of suturing,” he says. “We primarily use the da Vinci for radical prostatectomy, or surgical removal of the prostate, and it’s become our group’s standard of care. Using the system means less blood loss and a quicker recovery, plus some studies are showing a quicker return of urinary control and better recovery of sexual function.”

Erhard said there are benefits for the surgeon, too. “The da Vinci® is a much more ergonomically pleasing system than other laparoscopic methods because it causes less strain on the surgeon’s musculoskeletal system,” he explains.

Pediatric and adult surgeons look forward to finding innovative new uses for the da Vinci® Surgical System. In the future, the system will be used by cardiovascular and thoracic surgeons at Baptist Downtown to perform cardiac surgical procedures. These will include transmyocardial revascularization (a surgical procedure for patients with severe angina or chest pain), mitral valve repair (which treats leakage or narrowing of the mitral valve), and resection (surgical removal) of mediastinal (midchest) and lung masses.

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*Baptist Health is a faith-based, mission-driven system comprised of Baptist Medical Center Downtown, Baptist Heart Hospital, Baptist Medical Center Beaches, Baptist Medical Center Nassau; Baptist Medical Center South and Wolfson Children’s Hospital - Jacksonville’s only children’s hospital. Baptist Health also includes cardiology and cardiovascular surgery services, a comprehensive cancer center, orthopaedic institute, women’s resource center, a full range of psychology and psychiatry services, outpatient facilities and a network of primary care physicians’ offices throughout Northeast Florida. Baptist Health is the official healthcare provider for the Jacksonville Jaguars.*

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