Robotic-assisted procedure offers new hope for women struggling to conceive

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (June 13, 2012) – The first robotic-assisted microsurgical tubal surgery in St. Louis was recently performed at SSM DePaul Health Center, offering a new and improved alternative for women who are having difficulty conceiving.

Saji Jacob, MD, an infertility specialist on staff with the SSM Robotic Surgery Institute at DePaul Health Center, performed the surgery using DePaul’s state-of-the-art da Vinci Robotic Surgical System. The surgery involves unblocking and repairing a woman’s fallopian tubes through a tiny keyhole incision, instead of a traditional “open” surgery. A fallopian tube blockage typically prevents successful passage of the egg released from the ovary into the uterus. Robotic-assisted microsurgery can be used to try to correct this common cause of infertility. Here, using advanced microsurgical techniques, the damage to the fallopian tubes are repaired.

This procedure can be performed as an alternative to the traditional “open” surgical procedure or in vitro fertilization (IVF), which both typically have only a 40 to 50 percent success rate, says Dr. Jacob. It also can be an option for patients who have previously had a tubal ligation (“tubes tied”), congenital tubal defects, damage from endometriosis, or other abnormalities.

“A significant benefit of the robotic microsurgery is that it has a much better success rate for women, typically 85 – 95 percent, which is incredible,” says Dr. Jacob.

Using the da Vinci Robotic Surgical System’s specialized instruments and enhanced magnification gives physicians greater precision than ever before. Patients experience less scarring, less risk of infection, less blood loss and a shorter hospital stay.

“Patients are typically home the same or next day morning, and only have a one–week recovery time, instead of six–to–eight weeks with a traditional open surgery,” Dr. Jacob says.

The SSM Robotic Surgery Institute at DePaul is the most comprehensive program in the St. Louis–region. SSM DePaul physicians are performing cutting edge minimally–invasive surgeries that offer patients better results, a faster recovery and quicker return to normal activities. For more information, visit www.ssmdepaul.com

About Saji Jacob, MD
Dr. Jacob is a board–certified OBGYN on–staff with SSM Maternity Care at DePaul Health Center and also serves as medical director for the Center for Reproductive Medicine and Robotic Surgery. Dr. Jacob specializes in advanced gynecological robotic surgeries like complex hysterectomy, myomectomies (fibroid removal surgery), endometriosis surgery, and surgery for pelvic pain. For more information, visit www.gofertility.com or call 314–473–1285.
About SSM DePaul Health Center
SSM DePaul Health Center is a 478-bed, full-service hospital and a member of SSM Health Care–St. Louis located at the intersection of Interstates 70 and 270 in Bridgeton. Founded in 1828, DePaul was the first hospital west of the Mississippi River and remains the oldest continuously existing business in St. Louis. Today DePaul is a Joint Commission-certified Primary Stroke Center, operates the only Level II Trauma Center in its service region and offers the most advanced technology and procedures available including minimally invasive heart, spine, knee, hip and weight loss surgery. DePaul also operates the most comprehensive robotic surgical program in the region and is two-time recipient of the Missouri Quality Award and a Premier QUEST High Performing Hospital. To learn more, visit www.ssmdepaul.com.

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