



Better Prostate Cancer Treatment Gets You Back on Your Feet



For a referral to an oncologist at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, call 866-313-6019 or visit atlanticehealth.org and click on "Find A Doctor."

After having a yearly physical exam in 2009, Brendan Mullen, 49, an environmental engineer from Cedar Knolls, N.J., received devastating news. A prostate-specific antigen test revealed he had prostate cancer.

HAVING A FAMILY history of prostate cancer, Mullen knew the importance of attacking his cancer aggressively.

"I had two uncles die from prostate cancer," Mullen says. "I knew to have a long life with my wife and two children meant I needed to find physicians who offered the latest treatment options."

Revolutionary Urologic Surgery

Mullen turned to an Overlook Hospital physician for care. After consulting with Andrew Bernstein, MD, chief of robotic surgery for Overlook, Mullen opted for da Vinci® prostatectomy.

"Dr. Bernstein was very generous with his time," Mullen says. "He sat down with me and informed me of all my options and the pros and cons of each."

In many cases, da Vinci surgery is appropriate when medication and other nonsurgical options prove unsuccessful.

However, many patients opt for da Vinci surgery because of its benefits over traditional surgery.

"In instances of prostate cancer, the treatment site is tightly confined and surrounded by nerves affecting urinary control and sexual function," Dr. Bernstein says. "The da Vinci system's robotic arms allow for increased dexterity and control. This helps surgeons operate with the greatest precision, sparing healthy nerves."

Getting Back to Your Life

Compared to traditional surgery, da Vinci prostatectomy improves a patient's recovery experience including:

- a shorter hospital stay
- a quicker return to routine
- fewer complications
- less blood loss
- less scarring
- significantly less pain

After undergoing a prostatectomy in July 2009, Mullen felt better than he anticipated.

"Within two days I was back home with my family," Mullen says. "I experienced no side effects such as urinary incontinence. I'm cancer-free today and am enjoying spending time with my family and running marathons."

Screenings for Men

The best way to battle cancer is to adopt a healthy lifestyle and undergo routine cancer screenings. Begin in your late teens or early 20s with skin cancer checks. Once you hit 40, talk with your doctor about having prostate cancer screenings. In your 50s, have regular prostate checks and undergo your first colonoscopy.