

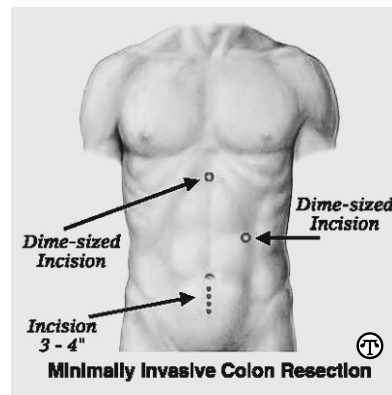
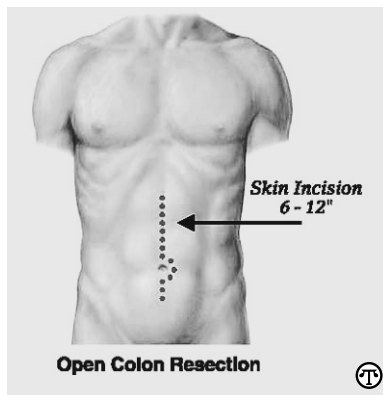
Less-Invasive Surgery Now An Option For Colon Cancer

(NAPSA)—Minimally invasive surgery results in less pain and less scarring—and has a quicker recovery—than procedures commonly used in the past. Now it is an option for colon cancer patients. The news is significant, considering that about 150,000 new cases of colon cancer are diagnosed in the U.S. every year.

In the past, most colon cancer patients underwent open surgery for the disease. However, a recent study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* demonstrated that the rates of recurrent cancer were similar after laparoscopically assisted colectomy and open colectomy, suggesting that the laparoscopic, or minimally invasive, approach is an acceptable alternative to open surgery for colon cancer.

During minimally invasive colon surgery, a small video camera, or “scope,” is placed in one of a series of small abdominal incisions, providing the surgeon with a magnified view of the patient’s internal organs on a television monitor. Surgical instruments are placed in other small incisions, allowing the surgeon to work inside and remove portions of the diseased colon. This technique can also be used to treat other diseases of the colon, such as Crohn’s disease and diverticulitis.

Doctors say the minimally invasive surgery offers benefits over traditional open surgery, including quicker recovery time, shorter hospital stay, less pain and scarring. Patients such as Judy have already benefited from the newer, less-invasive procedures. “I was completely blown



Back To Your Life Sooner—Colon cancer surgery can now have a short recovery time.

away when my doctor told me I had a colon tumor and would need surgery,” said Judy, who runs a day care center in her home.

“I felt I could beat the cancer, but I couldn’t afford to be sick. My husband had just returned to work after 18 months with a shattered pelvis. I simply couldn’t shut down the day care center. My first concern was how long it would take to get back to work after the surgery.”

That concern was addressed immediately when Judy connected with Dr. David Ondrula, a leading colorectal surgeon who has been doing pioneering work in minimally invasive colon surgery.

Although Judy would be facing removal of her ovaries and appendix, in addition to 12 inches of her colon, Dr. Ondrula explained that her recovery period following surgery would be brief. The surgery was performed on a Tuesday and Judy was back home on Friday. Perhaps even more re-

markable, she was out and about on Saturday.

“I am a member of our village board of trustees,” noted Judy, “and on Saturday I was out in the park officiating at an Eagle Scout project. The following Tuesday, I attended our board meeting and I was back at work in two weeks, lifting up 3- and 4-year-old kids.”

Patients considering minimally invasive surgery for colon cancer should consult with a surgeon experienced in laparoscopic techniques and who has performed at least 20 laparoscopic colorectal resections for benign disease or metastatic colon cancer.

As with any surgical procedure, there are risks that accompany minimally invasive surgery. Patients should discuss their surgical options with their doctor.

For more information on minimally invasive colon surgery, or to find a surgeon in your area who is qualified for this procedure, visit the Web site www.colonsurgeryinfo.com.