

Health Reach

YOUR RESOURCE FOR WELLNESS

VIRGINIA HOSPITAL
CENTER

Surgery & Special Procedures



GROUNDBREAKING COLORECTAL SURGERY

Surgery to remove rectal tumors most often requires an abdominal incision. However, patients with certain early stage rectal cancers or benign rectal polyps may be eligible for an alternative treatment that requires no surgical incision and only a one-night hospital stay.

Colorectal surgeon Othon Wiltz, MD was the first in Virginia to perform Transanal Endoscopic Microsurgery (TEM), a groundbreaking colorectal surgery that is offered at only about 50

locations in the U.S. including Virginia Hospital Center. Performed under general anesthesia, TEM is a painless method of removing abnormal rectal growths. Dissolvable suture and metal clips are either absorbed or expelled from the body naturally, so there is no need for follow-up suture removal.

Warning signs for colorectal disease include rectal bleeding, weight loss, a change in bowel habits or stool size and abdominal pain. One 72-year-old patient came to Dr. Wiltz after experiencing a rectal protrusion, which the patient mistook for a hemorrhoid.

A colonoscopy revealed a large benign rectal polyp. He underwent TEM to remove the polyp, which was the size of a grapefruit. "I was out of the hospital the next day and back to normal right after that," he says.

Because certain individuals are genetically predisposed to colorectal disease, knowing your family history is important. Colonoscopy (see page 10) remains the gold standard for the early detection of colorectal tumors.

For more information, call Washington Colorectal Surgery at 703.717.4180. ■

HEALTH TALK MARCH 6

Meet colorectal surgeon Othon Wiltz, MD to ask him questions about colorectal cancer.

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