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Doctors Offers Scarless Hysterectomies in West Boca

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Doctor offers scarless hysterectomies in West Boca

Gynecologist/obstetrician Dr. Zoila Almeida has made it her mission to let women know she's performing hysterectomies through the belly button that don't leave a scar.

"My patients say they hardly felt any pain, and they love the fact they can't see the incision," said Almeida, who has attending privileges at West Boca Medical Center. Her practice is Florida Gynecologic Oncology & Robotic Surgery, based in Coconut Creek.

Almeida lectures at the hospital and in the community to spread the word, and she teaches

other physicians. "We live in Boca where aesthetics is so important," she said. "Very few women raise their hands when I ask if they know about this."

Q: How long have you been doing this procedure?

A: I started over two years ago at Memorial Hospital Miramar, when the instrumentation was developed and FDA approved. I've done more than 100 surgeries, and I teach the course across the country. I just got home from Oregon.

Q: How does that work?

A: If a doctor wants to learn how to do it, he or

she will take a course, and I show them how to insert the device.

The other option is to observe me as a proctor at West Boca Medical Center. The patient and the hospital had to approve it. I have the first one scheduled this week.

Q: What exactly is this type of surgery?

A: It has multiple names depending on the products you use, but it's a one-incision laparoscopic surgery or scarless

surgery. It's a special type of surgery that requires a special device, a specific port that goes through the bellybutton that allows the incision to be less than 2 centimeters. The organs are removed through the vagina.

Q: Is this robotic surgery?

A: No, it's not. The robot requires four or five incisions that are visible.

Q: Is there any age range for this procedure?

A: My patients are anywhere from their 20s to 70s.

Q: What's the recovery time?

A: From a week to two weeks. Patients can drive within five days. But there is no heavy lifting so the incision can heal properly.

Q: Is there any woman who isn't a candidate for this procedure?

A: Someone with advanced cancer, or who may have had multiple surgeries, which would be my decision; someone who is severely obese or any patient that cannot undergo a laparoscopy, like a very sick cardiac patient.

Q: Does the instrument have a camera on it?

A: Yes, because the incision combines three instruments into one spot so if there's some bumping and crowding. It's a technical surgery and takes practice and skill.

Q: Is this procedure more expensive than a traditional hysterectomy?

A: No, in fact the insurance companies pay the doctors less.

Q: Where can women go to read more about this procedure?

A: My website, www.drzoiladgynec.com.



ALMEIDA