

World class medicine heals with a local touch



Steven W. Robison, M.D., and Ty Erickson, M.D., perform a procedure at Mountain View Hospital.

PHOTOS BY KORT DUCE

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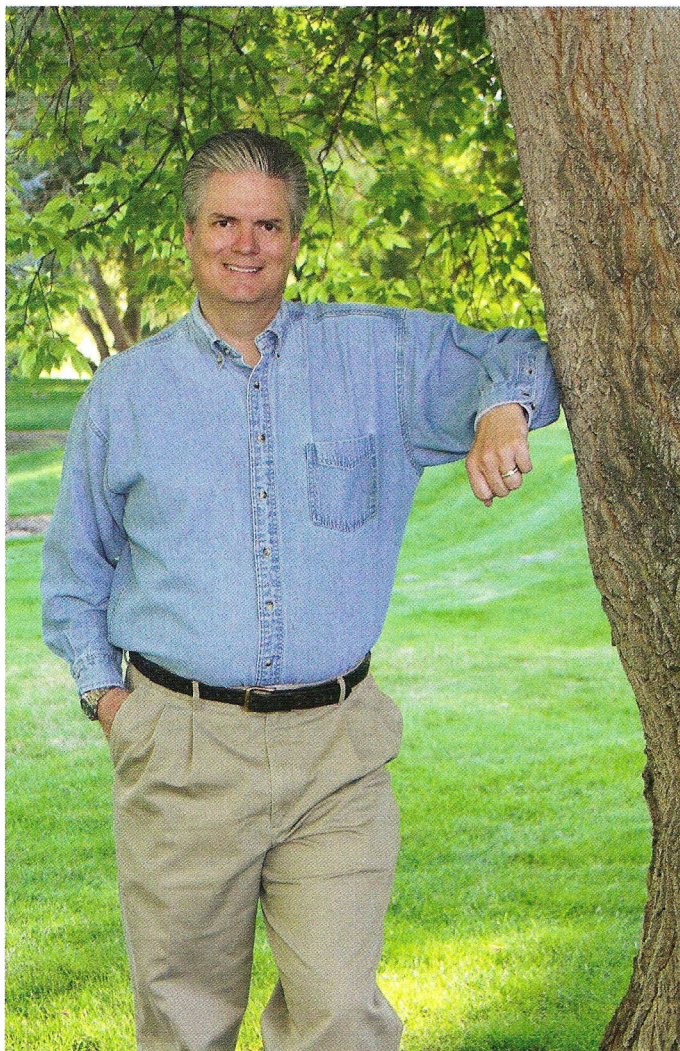
On March 8, 2007, Ty B. Erickson, M.D. performed the first MiniArc™ Sling procedure in the United States right here in Idaho Falls at Mountain View Hospital. This past April, he made history once more with the successful completion of the first Elevate surgery in the country. The procedures are important accomplishments not only for the doctor, but also for the quality of women's health care all over the world.

These two FDA-approved procedures treat conditions that women rarely talk about: incontinence and prolapse. They're revolutionary in that they require no external incisions for surgery — called needleless suspension — and carry a more optimal safety profile than their predecessors.

For most patients it's a same-day surgery or a one-night hospital visit. Then they're back and up to speed in no time.

Erickson was part of the physician design team for both procedures. Practicing in Idaho Falls, he focuses on female pelvic health at Rosemark WomenCare Specialists. Working with a company called American Medical Systems, he also travels the globe teaching other physicians how to perform what he calls "re-stringing the hammock."

Erickson's skills are needed, especially since an estimated 51 million women cope with urinary incontinence, 17 million of which are in this country alone, according to the AMS website. He talks about what inspires him to help improve women's quality of life, his global travels, and what makes southeastern Idaho so special.



Working with a company called American Medical Systems, Dr. Ty Erickson of Rosemark WomenCare Specialists travels the globe teaching other physicians how to perform what he calls "re-stringing the hammock."

COURTESY PHOTO

**The pelvis is like a
"bony frame."**

It's the metaphor that I use for my patients. The frame of the pelvis is like the frame of a hammock and there's a sling of muscle in there that internal organs — the bladder and the uterus — sit on.

When a baby comes down through, the muscle stretches and everything just starts to fall out. Genetic factors, certain high-risk professions that involve heavy lifting, chronic coughs — any kind of event that puts regular pressure on the pelvic floor — all contribute. It's a female hernia, which is literally what pelvic floor prolapse is.

I go in and repair, re-lift and reconstruct the sling by putting in a nylon knit mesh support to put things back where they belong.

A lot of women are suffering in silence because it's not a common condition to talk about. These techniques are proven in terms of their safety and are successful.

When a woman stops leaking urine — oh my goodness — she is so happy.

As I work with others in the field, we cross-pollinate ideas. I love pondering ways to improve the health of my patients.

Cycle time for new procedure approval is shortening.

So many ideas are developed by physicians or engineers and given to various companies, and it takes a couple of years to put them through the rigorous engineering process to develop them. Then they go before the governing board — here that would be the FDA — for safety approval and then they go out to the public.

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Most of these proposed procedures will piggyback on to previous technology so that you're not introducing something so new that other patient safety concerns are also introduced. The project I'm currently working on is going to take about 18 months to cycle through the process.

New medical research is remarkable.

We're seeing it in cardiology; we're seeing it in orthopedics. The future of stem cell research is going to be marvelous for our female patients, too.

The day will come when, instead of having to introduce a foreign material to a woman's body, we'll use the patient's own cells and then modify them so that they can form this material from their natural collagen, then perhaps inject it around the pelvis and it will automatically grow a stronger support structure.

The future generation of women won't have to go through surgical procedures; it will just be an injection or a pill, medicine traveling down to the pelvis that will biomedically engineer and reconstruct itself. We're not that far away from these concepts. They're in research and design right now.

Physicians all over the world have passion.

I am amazed at the quality of surgeons that I have interacted with. Almost all have great enthusiasm to improve the lives of their patients. They have great skill and an eagerness to learn new techniques. I was particularly impressed with the surgeons in Spain. They were so gracious! It was so refreshing.



Videoista tehokkuutta ope

Träskin 12. kerroksen luentosalin on kerääntynyt parinkymmenen hengen ryhmä gynekologeja. Talon alakerrassa amerikkalainen Ty Erickson tekee leikkausta, joka videoidaan ja lähetetään suoraan luentosalin valkokankaalle.

Meneillään on perustamiskurssin loppuvaihe workshop, jonka tarkoituksena on antaa osallistujille uutta tietoa suomalaisesta historiasta.

– Meillä kay aikoo oon nikkomastansa lauppuvessantuvuortta laumomastassa ja demostromastassa vutalassa liikkomastikkukonta. Tälän tyypit workshop ovat meillä tervetia, sillei ei muu me tälä TYKS:sta ha- fustem sille liikkomastikkukontaa meidän lauppuvessan liikkomastassa, laumomastassa vutalassa, sillei me Pentti Kiihdoma TYKS:sta tottava.

Metsätilain ohjassa työkalupakissa Ty Erickson opettaa, miten polypropyleniverkon avulla voidaan korjata laskunsa. Koulutuksen mukaan leikkurimääränsä on vähentynyt viimeisen kolmen vuoden aikana enemmän kuin aikaisempien 99 vuoden aikana.

- Tällaisi verkkomarkkinatiloja on saatavissa monesta kioskista. Verkkosivut hyödyntävät ja nauttivat verkkosivujen kioskista kioskista, josta on helpoista, että se on kioskista kioskista.

TYKSuokien on tällä tavalla menettänyt k
tetty jo kahden vuoden ajan yhteensä 5
150 leikkakuvaa. Kallio on selvittänyt.

Workshop-päivät jaetaan Erä-
opisto-kolme osaan. Kukin osio
pitää vähintään 90 minuuttia. Erä-
opisto välillä Eräkesä käy luonnossa tutustui-
maan lyhyen luennon kytämällänsä teho-
kasta. Eräopisto luonnollisesti on olemassa
muutakin luonnossa tutustui-
kseen.

**Videointi tehokas apu
koulutuksessa**
TYKissä käytössä oleva,

leikkauksien vaurion korjaukseen erikoisavusteina on sekä suora valvonta- ja tukitoiminta, josta puuttuu osittain koulutuskeskittämisen ja parantuneen koulutuksen kehittämisen ja koulutusjärjestelmän uudelleenorganisoinnin lisäksi osittain osittain koulutuksen ja koulutuksen välisen yhteistyön ja koulutuksen välisen yhteistyön, josta taas koulutuksen kehittämisen ja koulutuksen välisen yhteistyön.

ratatukemien lisäksi valvoo ja periaatteellisesti ohjaa myös valvontaa. Valvonta on myös puhtaasti kunnalta riippuvainen, sillä sen kateveltyyskoko voi riippua esimerkiksi hirsillä olevasta puusta tai valvon



Ty Erickson esculca
espina de maguey



Southeast Idaho is a great place to work and play.

We have a very vibrant, growing economy. This is just a wonderful environment for health care and we do in fact have quality health care in this community. I am so impressed with my counterparts in other specialties.

This generates camaraderie. As a pelvic floor specialist, there are times when I need to consult with an internal medicine or a kidney specialist, and you want to work where you have those support systems. The patients also benefit. There are so few specialty procedures where patients really need to leave Idaho Falls. It's just a marvelous place to practice.

But I also believe many of the health care providers are here because of lifestyle, just like me. I'm here because this is a wonderful place to raise a family. The travel times to the hospitals are so short, plus having all the outdoor recreational opportunities right here I'm able to have a much, much better lifestyle.

Health concerns for women.

The first is cardiovascular disease. It is the number one killer of women. Now, that's not one that women usually think about.

Second, the health care issue that women worry about, is cancer risk. We're vigilant about checking for breast cancer. But the sleeper that's creeping up on us is colon cancer because we're not screening as aggressively for that.

Then there's quality of life. The surgeries I do aren't a critical emergency, but the quality of life is affected and that's why we're here. I had a patient who was a dancer and she couldn't dance because she was incontinent. It totally affected her lifestyle. These are women who are generally in good health, but find it difficult to do the normal activities that they want to do.

We're going to live for many more years and we want to live a high quality life. Our cardiovascular health, our cancer prevention, and in my specialty, the quality of pelvic floor life is such an important part of it all.

*Erickson's work is featured
in a Finnish magazine.*

COURTESY PHOTO