



Endometrial Ablation Surgery

An Alternative for Treating Heavy Monthly Bleeding

involves scraping the inside of the uterus, also failed to provide relief. When **Dr. Todd Liu**, chairman of the Department of OB/GYN at SOCH, recommended endometrial ablation surgery, she was more than willing to give it a try.

“Jackie was an appropriate candidate for a type of minimally invasive endometrial ablation surgery,” explained Dr. Liu. “It works by thinning the lining of the uterus, called the endometrium, through the brief application of electrical energy.”

According to Dr. Liu, Jackie’s symptoms are all too familiar for many pre-menopausal women. “About one in five women in the United States experiences unusually heavy menstrual bleeding,” he said. “The important thing to remember is, these women do not have to suffer, because successful treatment options are available.”

If someone is unsure whether to seek medical care for heavy bleeding, Dr. Liu says, quite simply, that if this condition is keeping someone from enjoying life to the fullest, then it’s time to get help.

“Excessive menstrual bleeding can cause fatigue, anemia, embarrassing accidents and restricted activity,” he said. “Treatment will depend on the severity and frequency of the bleeding, the woman’s overall health and medical history, and whether she wants to become pregnant.”

According to Dr. Liu, the endometrial ablation procedure is a viable option for women who have completed child-bearing. “Women who want to become pregnant should not have this procedure,” he cautioned.

Endometrial ablation is performed on an outpatient basis. The patient, who is given a

local anesthetic and a sedative, typically will not experience any discomfort during the procedure, which takes less than five minutes. During the procedure, Dr. Liu uses a slender wand, inserted through the cervix, to deliver precisely measured electrical energy to thin the endometrium. The technique involves no incision and no scar, and, for most women, a very quick recovery with minimal discomfort. What’s more, studies have shown that the majority of women who have this treatment have seen significant improvement.

For Jackie, who had endometrial ablation nearly a year ago, the results speak for themselves. She had minor bleeding for a half a day two months following the procedure, and has had no symptoms since then.

“I am so glad I had this procedure,” she said. “It literally gave me my life back.”

While Dr. Liu touts endometrial ablation as a positive approach towards treating heavy bleeding, he emphasizes that each patient’s response to the surgery is different. “Jackie’s symptoms virtually disappeared, which may not be the case for everyone. However, even though some women may still get their period, most see a considerable reduction in the frequency and severity of bleeding, cramping and fatigue.”

Endometrial ablation is an alternative to long-term hormone therapy, which can come with unpleasant side effects and, as was the case with Jackie, is not always effective. In addition, it can be used instead of hysterectomy, a major surgical procedure that requires a hospital stay, and a recovery period of up to six weeks.

For more information about *endometrial ablation*, call **SOCHConnect** at 609-978-3400.

For years, a 49 year old patient we’ll call Jackie, experienced what she considered a normal menstrual cycle. However, in her mid-40’s, things started to change. “I was getting my period every two weeks, and, on top of that, I had really bad cramps,” said Jackie, who found that she also needed extra protection to control the unusually heavy bleeding.

Hormone therapy, first through the use of birth control pills and then via a patch on her hip, proved to be ineffective. Dilation and curettage surgery, commonly referred to as a D & C, a surgical procedure that



Todd Liu, MD
Chairman of the Department
of OB/GYN at SOCH

