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**UAMS Surgeon First in U.S.  
to Perform New Hysterectomy Surgery**

LITTLE ROCK — [Alexander Burnett](#), M.D., a gynecologic surgeon at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), is one of only a handful of surgeons worldwide and the first in the United States at the cutting edge of a new scarless and almost painless technique for hysterectomy.

The method is called Total Vaginal Natural Orifice Transluminal Endoscopic Surgery (V-NOTES) hysterectomy. Burnett trained directly with Jan Baekelandt, M.D., a surgeon in Belgium who invented the approach and has completed over 1,000 cases. Burnett has completed over 100 V-NOTES procedures to date and all have been successful.

“The biggest advantage for the patient is that there are no scars, and pain and downtime are minimal,” Burnett said. “For the health care system as a whole, there are also benefits: no patient hospital stay and no need for dangerous opioid pain medications.”

Hysterectomy, or removal of the uterus, is a common surgery for reproductive-age women in the United States, second only to cesarean section. Women may need a hysterectomy as part of treatment for:

- Gynecologic cancer
- Fibroids
- Endometriosis
- Uterine prolapse
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding
- Chronic pelvic pain

Traditionally, hysterectomies are performed via an incision to the abdomen, which requires a hospital stay of at least one or two days and a recovery period of a full six weeks before the patient can resume normal activities and physical exertion. Plus, the surgery leaves a scar.

To avoid these issues, surgeons have long sought alternative methods. Hysterectomy can be performed laparoscopically, using small incisions in the abdomen and lighted cameras. Burnett said the V-NOTES approach takes that idea a step further.

“With V-NOTES, the surgery is actually performed through the vaginal canal, so there are no incisions to the outside of the body that are visible after the surgery,” Burnett said. “I use a device called a laparoscopic port that covers the vagina. I am able to inflate the abdominal cavity with air, then place my surgical instruments and a lighted camera through the port. Once that’s in place, I am able to see and do everything I would normally be able to do with a laparoscopic hysterectomy.”

V-NOTES can also be used to remove the fallopian tubes and ovaries, if necessary. Burnett has even had cases where he discovered issues with a patient’s appendix during the hysterectomy and was able to remove it as well.

Burnett said any patient who would have been a candidate for laparoscopic hysterectomy, with a few stipulations, is a good candidate for V-NOTES.

“From my own perspective as a physician and from the feedback I’ve gotten from patients, I believe V-NOTES offers even more advantages over traditional hysterectomy than laparoscopy through the abdomen,” Burnett said. “I am glad to be able to offer this technique in Arkansas as we continue to look for the latest ways to better serve our patients, to advance research, and to teach the next generation of physicians to approach innovative options.”

For more information, visit <https://uamshealth.com/expertise/womens-health/> or call the Gynecologic Cancer Clinic, where Burnett sees patients, at 501-296-1200.

UAMS is the state’s only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS’ clinical enterprise including its hospital, regional clinics and clinics it operates or staffs in cooperation with other providers. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. *U.S. News & World Report* named UAMS Medical Center the state’s Best Hospital; ranked its ear, nose and throat program among the top 50 nationwide; and named six areas as high performing — cancer, colon cancer surgery, heart failure, hip replacement, knee replacement and lung cancer surgery. UAMS has 2,727 students, 870 medical residents and five dental residents. It is the state’s largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children’s Hospital, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit [www.uams.edu](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](https://uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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