

# Laparoscopic hysterectomy surgery now offered at Mason Health

## District improves the health of local women

For most of **Tanya Frazier's** adult life, she has suffered from painful menstrual cycles.

The Shelton mother and local nonprofit director also has ovarian cysts and Hashimoto's disease, a thyroid condition. Over the years, she has sought the opinion of multiple doctors so she could live without discomfort, but most prescribed pain medication and hormones.

Frazier wanted a different option.

"A lot of doctors in the past would say, 'Oh, take a pill to cover the pain,'" she said. "It wasn't until last year when I saw Dr. Andrea Martin and asked, 'Isn't there something else I can do?' that I began to hear about other options."

Last year, Frazier joined dozens of other local women who have taken advantage of a laparoscopic hysterectomy procedure now increasingly performed at Mason General Hospital.



**From left, Dr. Carey Martens, DO, and Dr. Andrea Martin, MD, pose before entering the Operating Room ahead of a laparoscopic hysterectomy performed in January. This is not Tanya Frazier's surgery. Photo by Arla Shephard Bull**

**Dr. Carey Martens, DO, and Dr. Andrea Martin, MD,** of MGH Mountain View Women's Health work seamlessly together to perform laparoscopic hysterectomies at Mason General Hospital.

The benefits of a laparoscopic hysterectomy are that patients are under anesthesia for a shorter amount of time, and recovery time is greatly reduced, from six to eight weeks to about two weeks, compared to an open abdominal surgery. Providers remove the uterus from the body using only two to three small incisions and a camera inserted through one of the incisions.

What further sets Mason Health apart from other larger hospital systems is that Dr. Martens and Dr. Martin perform the laparoscopic procedure without robotic assistance.

The average amount of time for the entire surgery is about one hour.

"Many larger hospitals may rely upon a robot to perform this procedure, but that actually increases the cost to the patient," Dr. Martens said. "It also increases operative time, which means more time under anesthesia."

Dr. Martens developed and perfected his surgical technique over the past 12 years. He came to Mason Health in 2018 and shared his knowledge and skill with Dr. Martin, who had also been performing the procedure for some time.

Now, both providers perform the procedure, separately if needed, but they enjoy working together in the operating room assisting one another.

"We complement each other really well in our styles, and there is a lot of trust and skill between us," Dr. Martin said. "The best feeling is having a team

to work with that you can feel comfortable with. Before, when it was just me, I didn't have that, but now I feel like I have someone who has my back."

While Frazier stayed overnight due to her medical history, she noted that her procedure went smoothly and that everyone communicated excellently with her and with one another.

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**"Absolutely this was the smoothest, fastest way to recover from a hysterectomy," she said. "Everything was super smooth and the entire staff was wonderful and great. Spending the night in Labor & Delivery was like having my own personal nurse."**

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Dr. Martens and Dr. Martin both work hard to make the procedure as easy for the patient as possible.

"Our goal is to efficiently take care of the patient in as minimally invasive a way as possible," Dr. Martens said. "I also really value how well we care for our patients afterward. We have exceptional care in our women's health unit. It's very similar to concierge nursing care."

"The fact that Mason Health's providers can perform complex surgeries on higher-risk patients without the need of a robot is amazing," Dr. Martin added.



**Dr. Andrea Martin, MD, far left, and Dr. Carey Martens, DO, perform a laparoscopic hysterectomy on a patient in January. In this photo, the providers are looking at the inside of the patient's body on a screen with the camera inserted in the abdomen. The patient pictured is not Tanya Frazier. Photo by Arla Shephard Bull**

"We're making it so that patients can get their surgeries here instead of going to a larger hospital away from home," she said. "We work together for the best course of action."

Frazier agreed. During her surgery, Dr. Martin found endometriosis and noted that Frazier's uterus was enlarged. Frazier had a supracervical hysterectomy, which meant that her ovaries were left intact and her uterus and fallopian tubes were removed.

"I have had no side effects at all, no crazy hormones," Frazier said. "I feel good and strong. I chose to go to Mason Health because Andrea Martin is amazing and takes the time to explain things in a way that make sense to me. I love that it is close to home. No one wants to drive a long distance home after having abdominal surgery. It's awesome to have this service basically in your own backyard."

**To make an appointment with Dr. Martens or Dr. Martin, call MGH Mountain View Women's Health at 360-426-0955. ■**