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WILLAMETTE VALLEY CANCER INSTITUTE AND RESEARCH CENTER PIONEERS PACIFIC NORTHWEST'S FIRST MINIMALLY INVASIVE, HIDDEN SCAR MASTECTOMY *Dr. Winnie Henderson Introduces Endoscopic Nipple-Sparing Mastectomy (E-NSM) at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend*

SPRINGFIELD, Ore. (November 16, 2026) – Patients facing breast cancer or prophylactic risk-reducing breast surgery in the Pacific Northwest now have access to a new minimally invasive option: endoscopic nipple-sparing mastectomy (E-NSM). Winnie Henderson, MD, PhD, FACS, CGRA, of Oregon Surgical Wellness (OSW), a division of Willamette Valley Cancer Institute and Research Center (WVCI), recently performed the region's first E-NSM at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend.

Unlike conventional nipple-sparing mastectomies, which require an incision of about two to four inches beneath the breast, E-NSM uses a single incision of just over an inch placed discreetly away from the breast near the underarm, leaving no visible scar on the breast. Using the GelPOINT® Mini access platform and high-definition endoscopic cameras, surgeons get a magnified view of the tissue so they can remove the breast while preserving the skin, nipple, and areola. Single-port (SP) mastectomy can also be performed with a SP Robotic Surgical System (SP rNSM), but that technology is not available in many communities, so the GelPOINT® Mini access platform gives facilities without robotic systems a way to offer single-port mastectomy.

"This new minimally invasive approach to mastectomy directly aligns with our Hidden Scar program's mission to reduce visible scarring and pain for better patient outcomes and quality of life," said Dr. Henderson. "It benefits the patient through a smaller incision, less pain, and a shorter recovery, and as a surgeon, it is more ergonomic and efficient. It is a true win-win."

A 2025 study published in *BJS Open* confirms that E-NSM offers the same cancer safety as conventional surgery while delivering higher cosmetic satisfaction, a lower risk of tissue complications, and potential advantages in preserving skin and nipple sensation. [1]

For "Lisa" *(name changed to protect patient privacy)*,becoming Oregon's first E-NSM patient offered hope for an easier recovery.

"I was a little nervous for the surgery, but as a cancer patient, I've suffered through so much already. I was willing to try this if it had a better chance at an easier recovery and better cosmetic look," said Lisa. "I was expecting a lot worse. It is painful, of course, but I was told I likely wouldn't have sensation, yet I still have sensation just a week out from

surgery. I'm glad I could be part of finding a way to make this procedure better and help someone else out."

Breast cancer affects one in eight U.S. women and remains the most common cancer diagnosis among American women.[2] While E-NSM is an option for both early-stage breast cancer patients and those with hereditary risks like *BRCA* mutations, it is not right for everyone. Ideal candidates are those whose tumors are located safely away from the nipple, and whose breast anatomy features smaller cup sizes (A, B, or C) without significant drooping or sagging (ptosis). Because many high-risk patients fit this profile, the procedure fits naturally with Dr. Henderson's work leading OSW's High-Risk Breast Clinic in Springfield.

"When I realized the U.S. was lagging behind Asia and Europe, where surgeons have performed E-NSM for years, I saw an opportunity to learn an innovative technique that makes care better for our breast patients," added Dr. Henderson. "Investing in specialized training allows us to bring the most advanced surgical options right here to our community. WVCI is excited to be the trailblazer in offering E-NSM as part of the standard surgical treatment for the suitable patients."

About Winnie Henderson, MD, PhD, FACS, CGRA

A Hong Kong immigrant and first-generation college graduate, Dr. Henderson earned her MD and PhD at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), where she also completed her surgical training. One of only three surgeons nationwide certified in Cancer Genetic Risk Assessment (CGRA), she directs OSW's Breast Surgical Oncology Clinic and High-Risk Breast Clinic in Springfield, is an affiliated associate professor at OHSU and a published researcher, serves on national surgical committees, and volunteers on surgical missions in Guatemala.

About Oregon Surgical Wellness

Oregon Surgical Wellness (OSW), a division of Willamette Valley Cancer Institute and Research Center (WVCI), provides specialized breast surgical oncology and Hidden Scar surgery in Springfield, Albany, Corvallis, and Newport. Part of The US Oncology Network, WVCI delivers comprehensive cancer care and clinical trials across the Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast. Learn more at OregonSurgicalWellness.com or OregonCancer.com.

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References

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2. American Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2025*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2025.