

## **Surgical services at St. Mary's Hospital of Superior**

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SMDC Health System has a well-kept secret at St. Mary's Hospital of Superior: In recent years the hospital has become a busy outpatient surgical center.

This year, an estimated 1,800 to 2,000 surgeries and procedures will be performed at the community hospital. Patients from all over the region are now coming to Superior for their outpatient surgery treatments.

Most patients love it because of the easy access and flat hospital parking area. Best of all, it's an environment where high-quality yet personalized care is the top priority. Five surgeons as well as podiatrists, urologists, gastroenterologists and other SMDC physicians see patients at the clinic and perform procedures and surgeries in the hospital. The quality of services is the same as it is in Duluth. Only the location is different.

In fact, after more than 20 years in Duluth, St. Mary's Hospital of Superior is the only place I now see patients and do surgery. Patients come from as far away as International Falls or as close as a few blocks away. Patients from smaller communities especially like the Superior hospital. They find it more comfortable because it reminds them of their hometown hospital.

Since Superior's surgery department focuses on outpatient surgery only, patients with complex medical illnesses, specialized surgical needs or procedures that will require hospitalization will need to be sent to St. Mary's Medical Center or SMDC Medical Center (formerly Miller-Dwan Medical Center) in Duluth for their surgical procedures.

Here are some examples of surgical procedures available at St. Mary's Hospital of Superior:

- Laparoscopic gall bladder and hernia surgery.
- Benign tumor removal.
- Standard hernia surgery.
- Some breast biopsies.
- Some varicose vein procedures.
- And soon we will offer lap band procedures for weight loss.

This summer we're expecting more orthopedic and urological services to be available, as well.

You can expect to see even more surgical services in the future at St. Mary's Hospital of Superior. Surgery schedules at the Duluth hospitals can fill up, and there's no space to create additional operating rooms. So the place for growth in outpatient surgery will be St. Mary's Hospital of Superior, the sister hospital of the SMDC facilities in Duluth.

I, for one, think it's the perfect answer because the staff treats patients with small-town warmth while they receive state-of-the-art care. That's what I call a no-lose situation.