Trans-Oral Robotic Surgery (TORS)

Transoral robotic surgery (TORS) uses the assistance of a surgical robot to remove a tumor from the mouth or throat. TORS is a relatively new approach to removing cancers from areas in the throat that are difficult to access, including the base of tongue and the lower portion of the tonsil. These two areas, along with other parts of the oropharynx (soft palate, posterior oropharynx wall), are the main tumor sites for which TORS is used. Using a robotic system to guide the surgical tools allows for precise movements in tiny spaces and the ability to work around corners. When compared with more traditional operations, transoral robotic surgery tends to result in a quicker recovery and fewer complications.

What to Expect:
- The robot consists of:
  1. 3D camera
  2. Two surgical arms: One arm with a grasping device and the other with a cutting device
- All three items are inserted into your mouth at appropriate angles to see and reach the tumor.
- Your surgeon is able to control the arms of the robot with great precision from the 3D view in his console.
- The assistant is at the head of the bed, helping with additional instruments, suctioning, and other things that might be needed.
- Exposure differs among patients, and removal of the tumor is not possible in some patients due to limited visualization.
- Once exposure is achieved, the camera is in place, and the surgical arms of the robot are in good position inside the mouth, your surgeon will proceed with surgery.

Things to know after surgery:
Recovery depends on the extent of the surgery and how well you are able to eat and drink following surgery.

Eating
- Depending on the extent of surgery, you may have a feeding tube placed through your nose or directly into your stomach to make sure you get nutrition.
- Your doctor will let you know when it is okay for you to start drinking and eating.
Pain Control

- Your pain will be managed with the help of the nurses.
- You will be discharged home with a prescription for pain medication to take as needed.

Signs and symptoms to report to your doctor:

- Redness, swelling, or increased pain that is not controlled by your pain medication
- Fever greater than 101.5
- Persistent nausea and vomiting
- Drainage, blood, or pus coming from surgical site
- If you experience difficulty breathing, call 911 or go to the emergency room.