



'CyberKnife' a breakthrough against tumors

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By [JANET ST. JAMES](#) / WFAA-TV

Amazing technology is making it possible to cure cancers that just a few months ago were untreatable.

Patients are coming from across the country to one North Texas hospital for the "CyberKnife" treatment.

Danny Davis recently walked through the halls of Baylor Medical Center, reborn. Six months ago, doctors discovered his melanoma had metastized into a large tumor in his lung - but the Houston oilman refused standard treatment.

"I said, 'I'll pass,'" he recalled. "I wouldn't drill a well for a ten-percent chance."

Instead, he became the first in the country to try CyberKnife surgery on his lung.

The CyberKnife is a radiation robot that rotates around a patient, slicing through the body with dozens of precisely-targeted beams. Similar technology has been used to successfully treat brain tumors in the past.

"Body tumors are much more difficult to treat, because the tumors move throughout the respiratory cycle," said radiation oncologist Dr. Brian Berger.

Berger said the CyberKnife compensates for breathing movements with pinpoint accuracy.

The new procedure also marked the last chance for Jim Morrison, who traveled from Virginia with an inoperable liver tumor.

"It would be nice to die of old age instead of liver cancer," Morrison said.

The cybernetic surgery could make that dream a reality, as it has for Danny Davis.

"'The alien killed the monster in me' - that's my slogan," Davis said.

Even doctors are surprised six weeks after his CyberKnife surgery.

"The tumor's decreased in volume by 90 percent," Berger said. "With standard radiation, it would be extremely difficult to get that kind of response."

And there are high hopes his tumor will be gone for good.

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