



**Scott Kramer MD**

Comprehensive, Contemporary, Compassionate Care for Women

## Minimally Invasive Urethral Sling—15 Years as Gold Standard for Stress Urinary Incontinence

A woman will never die of incontinence; however, she may die of embarrassment and surely compromise the quality of her life because of this common affliction. **Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI)** is the uncontrollable leakage of urine immediately following activities such as coughing, sneezing, laughing, and exercise.

24 years ago during my residency the operations that were then the evidenced-based gold standards of their time for correcting SUI required a long abdominal incision, 3-4 days hospitalization, and 6-8 weeks recuperation. This proved an obstacle to many women unless they suffered severe incontinence.

Virtually all these operations have been replaced by **urethral slings**, the overwhelming majority using a thin prolene mesh tape, which by the way the FDA has no concerns about. Contrast the aforementioned patient experience with performance of a sling that only requires about 10 minutes to insert through a ½ inch incision inside the vagina. The patient returns home a few hours afterwards, takes some ibuprofen for her mild discomfort, and returns to normal activities in a few days. This is a very acceptable solution that the majority of women with SUI will undertake once they learn about it. Most importantly in numerous studies cure rates for urethral slings range from 80 to better than 90%. Risks are minimal (less than 1% for serious complications).



Sadly despite this revolutionary progress so many women with leaky bladders suffer in silence because of embarrassment or misbeliefs that incontinence is a normal part of aging. This is where doctors can help by simply asking a question about losing “Bladder Control” that then opens a door for offering simple solutions. Yet most doctors are focused on life threatening conditions so neglect to do so.

First start with performing kegel exercises ([FYI: The “Bladder” section of my website’s online library ScottKramerMD.com has video and printed instructions](#)). Should this fail and leakage persists then you most likely can be helped with a minimally invasive urethral sling.

So if you’re tired of tolerating this humiliating affliction that requires you to wear pads and limit participation in activities you previously enjoyed, then talk to your doctor or find an incontinence expert to help you not

only regain bladder control but also your dignity.

*Wishing you good health!*

Scott Kramer MD, FACOG, FACS

*Share this newsletter with those you care... sisters, mothers, friends*