

# SOUTHERN NH HOSPITAL AND SPECIALISTS ARE ON THE FOREFRONT OF MINIMALLY INVASIVE BRAIN SURGERY

## *New Hampshire NeuroSpine Institute and Ear, Nose & Throat Specialists of New Hampshire bring advanced neurosurgical techniques to The Elliot Hospital*

Conventional brain surgery for many brings ideas of science fiction. Recent operations performed at The Elliot Hospital in Manchester were truly futuristic.

“What is happening at Elliot is exciting,” says Dr. Neal Luther, a neurosurgeon in Manchester. “Even some of the country’s major academic centers in neurosurgery in large cities are not capable of the techniques we have been able to perform here in Southern New Hampshire.”

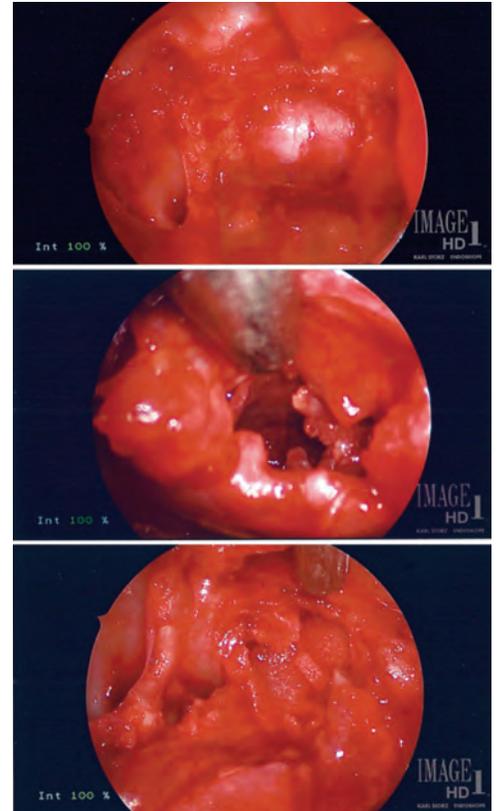
Early last year, Dr. Luther and Dr. Jeffrey Zimmerman, a head and neck surgeon in Manchester, forged a collaboration to perform surgical procedures where a tiny camera called an endoscope would be guided in the brain to treat brain tumors at the base of the skull. “I am happy that we are able to offer cutting edge, advanced skull base surgery in Manchester that previously required patients to travel outside of the region,” remarks Dr. Zimmerman. In addition, Dr. Luther has used endoscopes to treat problems that occur within the fluid chambers of the brain: the ventricular system. Dr. Luther and Dr. Zimmerman trained in these advanced techniques under the tutelage of national experts in New York City and Philadelphia, respectively.

Surgery is done through either a very small incision or through the nose with no incision at all, and visualization of the area of concern is improved over conventional surgery with the use of high-definition cameras and monitors. Patient recovery is faster and substantially improved. The most common diseases treated with endoscopes are tumors of the pituitary gland and hydrocephalus, which is a build-up of fluid in the brain.

Recently, patient Claude Benjamin began experiencing acute vision loss in his left eye. It was found that he had a very large tumor at the base of the skull (see Figure 1). “I am so thankful that Dr. Luther found the tumor. At the time my vision loss was minimal but had I not had surgery, I could have lost my vision completely at any time.” Mr. Benjamin was scheduled for a transsphenoidal approach to remove the tumor. Dr. Luther and Dr. Zimmerman worked together to remove the tumor without an incision through Claude’s nasal passage using an endoscope. “I awoke the next morning and my vision was completely restored. I felt great. I’m thankful to Dr. Luther and Dr. Zimmerman, as I was back to work within 3 weeks.”

“To date, the patients who have undergone endoscopic brain surgery at The Elliot have done very well,” Dr. Luther adds. “They are appreciative, I think, that an advanced, less invasive, and highly effective treatment option like this was available so close to home.”

 **The Elliot.**  
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*FIGURE 1: An endoscopic view through the nose at the region of the pituitary gland. The bone overlying the gland has been removed (a), the tumor is then removed (b), and the area is closed (c).*



*FIGURE 2: Endoscopic image within the third ventricle of the brain. A hole has been created in the floor of the ventricle for diversion of spinal fluid in a patient with hydrocephalus.*