



# The Cutting Edge

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### **Big Boom in Boomer Knee Replacement Surgeries**

The number of baby boomers who are opting for knee replacement surgery earlier in life is growing at an exponential rate, says J. David Blaha, M.D., an orthopaedic surgeon at the University of Michigan Health System. Only a few years ago, between 300,000 and 350,000 knee replacement surgeries were being done. Today, that number has risen to a staggering 500,000. And 10 years from now, experts estimate there could be as many as 3.2 million annual knee replacement surgeries. While knee replacement surgery does have a positive impact on a patient's quality of life, Blaha and other experts in the field worry that the demand for new knees will far outpace the availability of surgeons trained to perform the procedure. (University of Michigan Health System – June 2, 2008)

More at <http://www.newswise.com/articles/view/541310/?sc=rsmn>

### **Video game technology may help surgeons operate on beating hearts**

Surgery has been done inside some adults' hearts while the heart is still beating, avoiding the need to open the chest, stop the heart and put patients on cardiopulmonary bypass. But to perform intricate beating-heart operations in babies with congenital heart disease or do beating-heart complex repairs in adults, surgeons need fast, highly sophisticated real-time imaging that allows them to see depth. In an NIH-funded study featured on the cover of the June Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, cardiac surgeons from Children's Hospital Boston report good results with a simple technology borrowed from the gaming industry: stereo glasses. (Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery – June 9, 2008)

More at <http://www.childrenshospital.org/newsroom/Site1339/mainpageS1339P1sublevel435.html>



### **A Medical Miracle Saves Baby's Life From Life-Threatening Tumor**

At four weeks old, Macie McCartney has already had two birthdays. That's remarkable, considering there was a time her parents feared she'd never see even one, CBS News correspondent Kelly Cobiella reports. Four months into Keri McCartney's pregnancy, doctors spotted a tumor growing on the baby's tailbone - a rare and, in Macie's case, fatal condition striking one in 35,000 babies. The tumor was stealing blood from Macie, weakening her heart. So, at 25 weeks, surgeons cut into Keri's abdomen, pulled out the entire uterus - and then half of Macie. The tumor was the size of a grapefruit. Surgeons carefully cut away the non-cancerous tumor, monitoring Macie's heart and pumping saline into the womb where the other half of her body was tucked inside. (CBS News - June 6, 2008)

More at

[http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/06/06/eveningnews/main4161410.shtml?source=RSSattr=HOME\\_4161410](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/06/06/eveningnews/main4161410.shtml?source=RSSattr=HOME_4161410)

### **One-third of deaths from bypass surgery likely preventable, study finds**

Less than two per cent of patients who undergo cardiac bypass die in hospital after their surgery, but an Ontario study suggests about one-third of these fatalities could have been prevented. In a study of records from nine Ontario hospitals that routinely perform bypass surgery, researchers found that 111 of 347 randomly selected cases that resulted in death could have potentially been avoided. The study, published in Tuesday's edition of the American Heart Association journal *Circulation*, was undertaken by the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES) to determine quality of patient care and how it might be improved. (Canadian Press - June 9, 2008)

More at <http://www.cbc.ca/cp/health/080609/x060915A.html>

### **Blood-sucking device saves heart patients, study shows**

A vacuum-cleaner-like device that sucks blood clots out of the arteries of heart attack victims before angioplasty reduces the death rate in the following year by nearly half, researchers reported today. By physically removing clots, the device prevents loose fragments from breaking off, flowing through the bloodstream and blocking other vessels. Based on preliminary results from this study and others, cardiovascular surgeons in many large centers are already using the technique to improve outcomes for their patients. (Los Angeles Times - June 6, 2008)

More at [http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-sci-heart6-2008jun06\\_0,5954764.story?track=rss](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-sci-heart6-2008jun06_0,5954764.story?track=rss)

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