

# A Report on the Clinical Use of the DASH™ Retractor in Gynecologic Oncology

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## BACKGROUND

The DASH™ retractor (EZ Surgical, Inc., Hewlett, New York) is a malleable absorbent retractor and especially useful in open abdominal cases. It is comprised of an inner core of stainless steel mesh, coated for safety, and enclosed in the equivalent of 12 lap-pads.

The DASH™ retractor allows for better retraction of bowel and other abdominal structures than lap sponge packing can offer or even traditional towels. The retractor conforms to the curve of the abdomen and is augmented by the standard retractors. Lap-sponge packing comes with the risk of foreign body retention<sup>1</sup> and we noticed a significant reduction in lap pad utilization<sup>2</sup> for the purpose of retraction in our initial experience with the DASH™ retractor.

The DASH™ retractor is invaluable in overweight or obese patients where the standard Bookwalter retractor or Balfour instrument is not sufficient to gain visualization of pelvic structures. However, various sizes make it useful in all patients. It is safe and easy to use and can effectively augment retraction to gain better exposure in almost any abdominal situation. The retraction is better with fewer intraoperative adjustments leading to time saved during surgery in these patients. (Note figure 1)

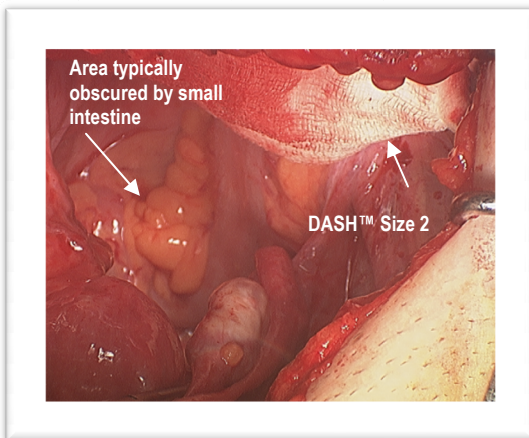


Figure 1: Visualization attained through use of DASH™

## METHODS

We have used the DASH™ retractor in 10 abdominal hysterectomies from August – September 2007. Size 2 (4”x7”) was the primary size used (7/10) and folded lengthwise. Size 3 (4”x11”) was employed in three cases due to high BMI. The abdominal wall was lifted by the assistant and the surgeon subsequently repositioned the

small intestine cephalad behind the DASH™ retractor. The anterior abdominal wall was then released to anchor the DASH™ retractor in place.

## RESULTS

In 9/10 cases (90%) we found the device very easy to use (grade 1 on a scale of 1-5). In one case, due to the very petite size of the patient, the DASH™ retractor was graded a 2. In 8/10 (80%) of cases, approximately 5-10 minutes of OR time was saved primarily as a function of having consistent exposure and reduced count time.

On a scale of 1-5, in all cases “value added” was measured as 1 (100%). The questionnaire presented for data collection (EZ Surgical, Inc. FQM-01-006-01) asked “would you like this product available in your OR?” Choice answers were “yes” or “no”. For all patients 10/10 (100%) a yes answer was given.

## DISCUSSION

The DASH™ retractor is an intuitive and relatively inexpensive retractor that comprises several features in the goal of retraction. It provides excellent exposure/visualization in the operative field; effective displacement of small intestine; minimizes trauma to small intestine, and most importantly reduces the number of lap pads which are necessary for frequent small intestine retraction. As a result, it is very possible that the DASH™ retractor is another tool in the surgeons’ armamentarium to reduce the risk of RFB (retained foreign bodies) thereby enhancing patient safety in the operating suite.

## CONCLUSION

The DASH™ retractor is a valuable tool especially in the surgical management of oncology patients.

## References

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2. Enker WE, Martz JE, Picon A, Koulos J, Goldman N, Yang P, Harris L. A Report on the Introduction of the EZ DASH lap into Clinical Use. Beth Israel Medical Center, New York NY; 2007

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