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## Robotic Applications in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

Jesse Selber

## **INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, robotic surgery has grown to dominate minimally invasive applications in the various surgical subspecialties. The currently available robotic surgical platform (da Vinci, Intuitive Surgical, Sunnyvale, CA) consists of two integrated subsystems: a surgeon console and a patient side cart (Fig. 9.1). While seated at the console, the surgeon controls the instruments and endoscope using two small hand-operated mechanisms residing within the console (Fig. 9.2). The instruments themselves are capable of supination, pronation, flexion and extension, and grasping, much like the human hand, making them considerably more agile than standard endoscopic instrumentation (Fig. 9.3). The endoscope (Fig. 9.4) provides two independent images that are fused to form a 3-dimensional (3-D) view at the console.

## **OPERATING INTERFACE**

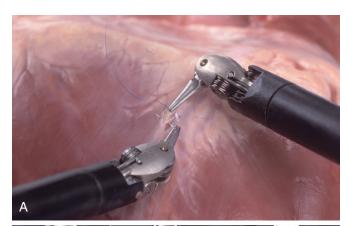
The basic surgical robotic interface is what is referred to in engineering as a "master-slave" model. The surgeon sits at a console and controls the movements of the arms and instruments remotely, but in real-time. The movements performed by the surgeon are mimicked precisely by the movements of the robotic arms and wrists. The hand controls are designed in such a way that gross movements of the



Figure 9.1 The da Vinci system is composed of integrated subsystems. A surgeon console where the surgeon sits, a patient side cart, which interacts directly with the patient, and a vision tower, which houses the central processing unit, camera, light source, and monitor. (©2016 Intuitive Surgical, Inc. Used with permission.)

surgeon's arms in space translate into movements of the large robotic arms, and finer movements of the surgeon's wrist and fingertips are translated into fine motion at the tips of the instruments, which are controlled by a pulley system.

Instrument motion is very smooth and precise. Tremor is eliminated completely and motion paths of the robotic instruments are smaller and smoother than the surgeon's own motion. There is no haptic, or sensory, feedback delivered by the robotic interface, so there is no force feedback to aid the surgeon in understanding tissue reaction. This is cited as the principal disadvantage of the robotic surgical interface. All data about tissue reaction must be extracted





**Figure 9.2** The surgeon controls the robotic arm (A) using two hand-operated mechanisms that reside within the surgeon console (B). (©2016 Intuitive Surgical, Inc. Used with permission.)