

Virtual Ports Receives FDA Clearance to Market the EndoClear™

The EndoClear is the world's first FDA-cleared device that can be used to clean endoscopic cameras inside the abdominal cavity during laparoscopic surgery. It is the second product developed by Visual Ports to receive FDA clearance in the two years since the company was founded.

Virtual Ports, Ltd. (<http://www.virtual-ports.com>), which develops products for use in laparoscopy, announced today that it has received FDA clearance to market the EndoClear™, a device for cleaning the lens of the camera used by surgeons during laparoscopic surgery.

During the course of laparoscopic procedures the camera lens gets dirty repeatedly. Today the camera has to be withdrawn from the abdominal cavity to be cleaned—a process that wastes time, increases the risk of infection, and interrupts the surgeon's concentration. The EndoClear is a cleaning station that can be inserted into the abdominal cavity so that the camera can be cleaned rapid and efficiently without distraction to the surgeon.

There have been a number of attempts to address the camera-cleaning problem in the past, most involving modifications to the camera itself. Because of technological problems and limitations associated with the surgical environment, no device for cleaning a camera inside the abdominal cavity had, until now, received FDA clearance. Virtual Ports' solution to the problem is a freestanding disposable device that can be used with all brands of laparoscopy cameras.

Virtual Ports, established in May 2006, recently graduated from the incubator program of Misgav Venture Accelerator in the western Galilee. It has recorded the impressive feat of developing two medical devices and receiving FDA clearance for them in less than two years since its founding.

Virtual Ports is developing a complete line of devices for use in laparoscopic surgery, based on a unique and innovative concept that has significant advantages for reducing patient discomfort, reducing the cost of the procedure, and maximizing the surgeon's convenience.

In advanced abdominal surgery (laparoscopy), the surgical implements are inserted into the abdominal cavity through small incisions and controlled by the surgeon from outside the patient's body. Virtual Ports' method allows some of the implements to be anchored to the abdominal wall during the operation so that other instruments can be inserted through the same incision. The first device developed by the company, for which it received FDA clearance, is the EndoGrab™, a device for retracting internal organs and anchoring them to the internal abdominal wall during laparoscopic procedures .

More than three million laparoscopic procedures are performed each year in the United States and Europe. The field is expanding rapidly, and the number of procedures is expected to increase by 20% annually over the next few years.

According to Dr. Szold, the founder and past president of the Israel Society for Endoscopic Surgery “the EndoClear allows surgeons to overcome one of the most distracting factors during the surgery”.