

Diagnostic Laparoscopy

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This fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional.

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What is a diagnostic laparoscopy?

A diagnostic laparoscopy is an operation using keyhole surgery to look at your abdominal and pelvic organs. For some women minor treatments can be performed at the same time.

What are the benefits of surgery?

A diagnostic laparoscopy is good for finding out the cause of lower abdominal and pelvic pain, certain period problems and infertility.

The operation will help to find out if you have one of the following conditions.

- Endometriosis
- Pelvic infection
- Tissues that have joined together in an abnormal way
- Damaged fallopian tubes
- Ectopic pregnancy
- Ovarian cysts
- Fibroids

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

It may be appropriate to try to find the cause of your symptoms using a blood test, x-rays and scans.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is usually performed under a general anaesthetic but various anaesthetic techniques are possible. The operation usually takes 15 to 30 minutes.

Your gynaecologist will make a small cut, usually on or near your belly button, so they can insert an instrument in your abdominal cavity to inflate it with gas (carbon dioxide). They will usually make a further cut on your 'bikini' line so they can insert tubes (ports) into your abdomen. Your gynaecologist will insert instruments through the ports along with a telescope so they can see inside your abdomen and perform any minor procedures.

Your gynaecologist may make one or two further small cuts so they can insert more ports, depending on any surgery you need. They may

need to place instruments through your vagina to help them perform the surgery.

How can I prepare myself for the operation?

If you smoke, stopping smoking now may reduce your risk of developing complications and will improve your long-term health.

Try to maintain a healthy weight. You have a higher risk of developing complications if you are overweight.

Regular exercise should help to prepare you for the operation, help you to recover and improve your long-term health. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Speak to the healthcare team about any vaccinations you might need to reduce your risk of serious illness while you recover. When you come into hospital, practise hand washing and wear a face covering when asked.

What complications can happen?

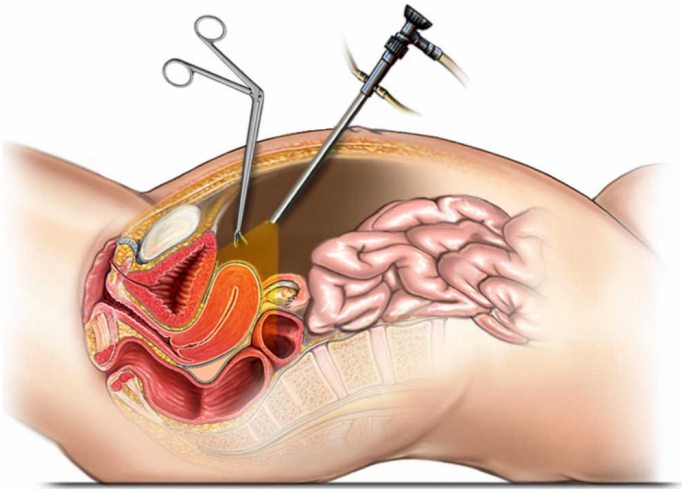
Some complications can be serious and can even cause death.

General complications of any operation

- Feeling or being sick
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication
- Venous thromboembolism
- Chest infection

Specific complications of this operation

- Surgical emphysema
- Developing a hernia near one of the cuts used to insert the ports
- Damage to structures such as your bowel, bladder or blood vessels
- Making a hole in your womb or cervix with possible damage to a nearby structure



Laparoscopic surgery

- Gas embolism
- Failure to find out what the problem is
- Failed procedure
- Infection of the gynaecological organs or bladder

Consequences of this procedure

- Pain
- Unsightly scarring of your skin

How soon will I recover?

The healthcare team will tell you what was found during the laparoscopy and discuss with you any treatment or follow-up you need.

You should be able to go home the same day.

Rest for 1 to 2 days and take painkillers if you need them.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Summary

A diagnostic laparoscopy is a common gynaecological operation. It helps to find out the cause of certain gynaecological problems. For some women minor treatments can be performed at the same time.

Keep this information document. Use it to help you if you need to talk to the healthcare team.

Some information, such as risk and complication statistics, is taken from global studies and/or databases. Please ask your surgeon or doctor for more information about the risks that are specific to you, and they may be able to tell you about any other suitable treatments options.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant healthcare team would give you.

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Illustrator

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