



Laparoscopy

For Gynecological Procedures

Laparoscopy is a type of surgery that uses very small incisions (cuts), usually less than an inch. The doctor will place a laparoscope, a thin camera with a light through an incision to look at your internal organs.

What is laparoscopy?

Laparoscopy is a type of surgery that uses very small cuts (incisions), usually less than an inch long. The doctor will place a thin camera with a light (laparoscope) through an incision to look at your internal organs. Your belly (abdomen) is filled with a gas (carbon dioxide) so the doctor can see your internal organs.

The doctor will place other narrow instruments through the incisions to perform surgery. After the surgery is over, the incisions are closed with a stitch or glue.

Why is it done?

Laparoscopy can be used for many surgeries, including:

- Removing ovarian cysts, or one or both ovaries
- Removing the uterus (hysterectomy)
- To look for the cause of pelvic pain
- Treating endometriosis
- Looking at how your reproductive structures have developed

What happens after the surgery?

Most patients go home the same day as the surgery or stay overnight. You will likely be able to return to most of your normal activities within a few days to 2 weeks after the surgery. It will depend on the type of surgery you are having.

Will I have pain after the surgery?

We partner with you to prevent and relieve pain as completely as possible. Most people will need pain medicine for a few days after the surgery to help with the pain and soreness around the incisions. You may have pain in your shoulders from the gas used during the surgery.

We encourage you to take an active part in your recovery by talking with your care team about your options. In addition to medicine prescribed for pain, use coping activities that work for you (for example: music, warm pack, relaxation breathing). No matter what the level of your pain, we join you to assess and respond right away. Pain management is everyone's responsibility and helps you get better faster, let your doctor or nurse know if you are in pain.

To keep you and your family safe, store medicines inside a locked cabinet or in a location where others cannot easily access them. Once you have recovered from surgery, dispose of all unused medicines. Taking unused pain medicines, on purpose or by accident, can be very dangerous.

To Learn More

- Adolescent Gynecology
206-987-3005
- After hours on-call
OB/GYN
206-987-2000
- Ask your child's
healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

For more information about safe disposal of unused medications, including opioid pain medications, read our handout "How to Get Rid of Unused Prescription Medication" at www.seattlechildrens.org/pdf/PE784.pdf, or visit www.takebackyourmeds.org to find a take-back location near you.

What are the benefits?

The main benefits of laparoscopic surgery over a larger incision surgery are:

- Recovery time is shorter
- There is usually less blood loss and less scarring
- There is less risk of infection

Your surgeon may need to make a larger incision if you are having a complex surgery.

What are the risks?

The risks of laparoscopy are small, but include:

- Bleeding
- Infection
- Damage to the bowel, bladder, blood vessels and nerves
- Hernia
- Some women will have a reaction to anesthesia, the medicine given to make you sleep without pain during the surgery.

For more information, please visit the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) at www.acog.org/Patients.