

## Diagnostic Laparoscopy

A laparoscope, (a rod with a lens system, connected to a video camera, a fibre optic cable system and a cold light source to illuminate the operative field within the abdomen) is introduced through a 5mm or 10 mm cannula via a small incision in the abdomen. Additional thin instruments can be introduced through side ports.

The abdominal cavity is filled (insufflated) with carbon dioxide gas to create a working and viewing space for the surgeon.

The surgeon is able to move aside tissue and organs to gain a view of the structures within the abdominal cavity.

Sometimes interventions are needed in diagnostic laparoscopies if something abnormal is found – for example taking biopsy samples of tissue, excising endometriosis and dividing adhesions, or removing an abnormal looking appendix.

The instruments are removed from the abdomen, and the carbon dioxide gas is allowed to escape, then the small incisions are sutured and covered with adhesive dressings.

### Specific Risks to Laparoscopy

Serious problems due to laparoscopic surgery are uncommon. Possible risks include:

- Injury to organs such as intestine and bladder
- Injury to major blood vessels
- Gas embolism (a bubble of CO<sub>2</sub> gets into a blood vessel (this can be life-threatening))

### Unexpected Side Effects

- You may experience some discomfort in your right shoulder from the carbon dioxide used during surgery. This is temporary and may be relieved by heat to the area, pain tablets and walking around.
- Fever – a temperature of more than 38C may indicate infection – contact your surgeon.
- Discharging wounds – may also indicate infection – contact your surgeon.

### Expected Recovery

- The wounds have sutures which will dissolve over two or three weeks. The Mefix tape can be left on until it falls off. You can shower with this dressing on.
- Avoid strenuous physical activity for three weeks post operatively.
- Return to normal daily activities and diet as tolerated. The abdomen will feel bloated and tight for a few days, but this will resolve as you return to normal activities.

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