

# Patient information

## Laparoscopy

### What is it?

Laparoscopy is a technique where a fine telescope called a laparoscope is inserted into the abdomen through 'keyhole' incision after distending the abdomen with carbon monoxide. It allows the surgeon to inspect the organs of the pelvis, including the uterus (womb), ovaries and fallopian tubes. A further incision may be made to carry out further surgery such as taking biopsies, treatment for endometriosis, adhesions or cysts.

### Why is it carried out?

It is a diagnostic investigation to try and find the cause of your symptoms. It may be particularly valuable in cases where diagnostic imaging such as ultrasound has been unhelpful or inconclusive. Laparoscopy may not identify an obvious cause for your symptoms.

### Risks of surgery

Overall the risk of serious complications from diagnostic laparoscopy are uncommon (approx. 2 cases per 1000).

### Following your surgery

- You may have a quick shower / bath after 24 hours, thereafter daily. Remove any dressings and replace with clean plasters if necessary.
- Your stitches are dissolvable and do not need to be removed.
- You may experience some lower abdominal discomfort, like a period pain. This

can be relieved by taking painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen or similar pain-relieving medication.

- Occasionally, air from the surgery can cause discomfort around your shoulders (shoulder tip pain); this will gradually subside. (Peppermint water or mints may help to relieve this at home.)
- You may experience some vaginal bleeding for a few days after your operation. To reduce the risk of infection, please use sanitary towels or panty liners **not tampons** until your next period. These should be changed regularly.
- Do not have sexual intercourse for two weeks to allow healing to take place.
- You may drive when you are in full control of your vehicle, can safely perform and emergency stop, look round and reverse safely.
- You will need 2 – 3 days off work and should avoid heavy lifting for at least a week.

Special instructions.....  
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Return to work.....

If your procedure is straightforward you will not routinely return for an outpatient appointment and will be returned to the care of your GP. If you require a follow up appointment this will be sent to you.

**Contact your GP or GP out-of-hours service if:**

- Vaginal bleeding increases to more than you would consider a heavy period
- The blood loss contains large clots of blood
- You develop a smelly and / or offensive discharge or inflammation around the wounds and think you may have an infection
- You have severe pain

If you require any further advice please contact the Martin Corke Day Surgery Unit on 01284 713050 between 7.45am and 8.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Outside of these hours contact the gynaecology ward on 01284 713235 / 713236 and speak to the nurse in charge. Please have your hospital number on the discharge letter available.

Or contact NHS Direct: 111

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo)*

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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