

Patient Education

Cholecystectomy, Laparoscopic Surgery

Printed on 2019-11-19

You must carefully read the "Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer" below in order to understand and correctly use this information

Why is this procedure done?

A cholecystectomy is a procedure where your gallbladder is removed. Your gallbladder is a small, pear-shaped organ that is just behind your liver. Your liver makes bile which helps break down food. The gallbladder stores bile until it is needed.

You may need to have your gallbladder taken out if:

- You have small stones that block the bile from leaving the gallbladder. These are called gallstones.
- You have an infection in your gallbladder.
- Your gallbladder is not working normally.
- You have problems with your pancreas due to stones in the bile and pancreatic ducts.

What will the results be?

- Relieve the pain in your belly
- Treat infection
- Gallstones will be removed
- Less scarring if your surgery is done with a laparoscope

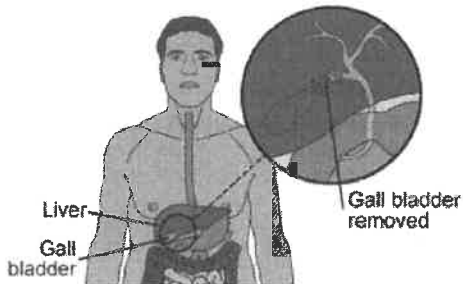
What happens before the procedure?

- Your doctor will ask you about your health history. Talk to the doctor about:
 - All the drugs you are taking. Be sure to include all prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, and herbal supplements. Tell the doctor about any drug allergy. Bring a list of drugs you take with you.
 - Any bleeding problems. Be sure to tell your doctor if you are taking any drugs that may cause bleeding. Some of these are Coumadin, ibuprofen, Aleve (naproxen), or aspirin. Certain vitamins and herbs, such as garlic and fish oil, may also add to the risk for bleeding. You may need to stop these drugs as well. Talk to your doctor about them.
 - When you need to stop eating or drinking before your procedure.
- Your doctor may order a procedure to empty out your stomach and bowel before the procedure.
- Your doctor will do an exam and may order:
 - Lab tests
 - X-rays
 - MRI scan
 - Ultrasound exam
 - HIDA scan
- You will not be allowed to drive right away after the procedure. Ask a family member or a friend to drive you home.

What happens during the procedure?

- Once you are in the operating room, the staff will put an IV in your arm to give you fluids and drugs. You will be given a drug to make you sleepy. It will also help you stay pain free during the surgery. Your doctor may also give you a nerve block or use special numbing drugs to help with pain even after your surgery.
- When you are asleep, the doctors put a tube in your mouth to help you breathe. They may also put another small tube in your nose. This one goes down to your stomach to drain out any fluids
- With a laparoscopic procedure your doctor will make 3 to 4 small cuts in your belly. A scope with a tiny camera is put through one of the small cuts to look at your organs and tissues. Your doctor will put small surgical tools into the holes to do the procedure. Your belly will be filled with gas to make it easier to see your organs.
- Then, your gallbladder will be removed.

Cholecystectomy



- You may have special x-rays to look for more gallstones. Your doctor will close your cuts cover them with clean bandages.
- This procedure may last from 1 to 1¹/₂ hours.

What happens after the procedure?

- You will go to the Recovery Room and the staff will watch you closely. The staff will take out your breathing tube when you are awake. If you have a tube into your stomach to drain fluids, it will come out after your doctor hears gurgling sounds from your stomach.
- You usually will go home the same day after the laparoscopic procedure. You may stay overnight if you are throwing up or can't pass your urine.
- You will get drugs to help with your pain.
- Some people feel pain in their shoulders after a laparoscopic surgery. This is because the gas used irritates the nerves. Use a heating pad and walk around to help get rid of the pain.
- You may walk around the hospital room with help after you are fully awake.
- The cut sites may be bruised and look red for a few days after the surgery. This is normal.

What drugs may be needed?

The doctor may order drugs to:

- Help with pain
- Fight an infection
- Soften stools if you are taking drugs for pain control
- Help with upset stomach

What changes to diet are needed?

Talk to your doctor about your diet and bowel movements.

- Eat foods such as jello, broth, popsicles, yogurt, and toast until you are sure that you are not feeling sick to your stomach. You may start eating your normal diet if you are not sick to your stomach. Call your doctor if you are not able to keep food and liquids down. Your doctor may order drugs to help an upset stomach.
- When you are taking pain drugs, you may have hard stools. Eat more fiber and drink extra water during this time.
- Later, your bowel movements may be runny after eating for a couple of months. Call your doctor if your bowel movements are preventing you from going to work or are getting in the way of your daily activities.

What problems could happen?

- Bleeding
- Pancreatitis
- Infection
- Swelling of the pancreas
- Injury to small bowel or liver
- Bile duct leak
- Dumping syndrome, which is the need to pass stool shortly after eating a meal. This may be temporary.

Where can I learn more?

FamilyDoctor.org

<http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/drugs-procedures-devices/procedures-devices/gallbladder-removal-laparoscopic-method.html>

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer:

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Last Reviewed Date

2019-03-11

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