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Laparoscopy

What is it and how is it performed?

Laparoscopy means looking into the abdomen with a small telescope around 10 mm in diameter to allow us to look at the internal gynaecological organs in 3D and in colour as opposed to 2D and colour that an ultrasound does.

Why is it performed?

A laparoscopy may be performed because you have pain in the pelvis or pain with intercourse.

How is it performed?

It is usually performed under a general anaesthetic and a small 1 cm cut in the belly button is made and a smaller ½ cm cut in the bikini line is also made.

Complications of surgery:

The most common complication is pain at the site of the belly button or sometimes in the shoulder as there can be trapped wind under the diaphragm. This pain usually settles quickly in 1-2 days. There is a small risk of 1:300-500 that there can be inadvertent damage to internal organs such as blood vessels and intestines. There is also an extremely small risk of death from a laparoscopy of 1:10,000 (this is obviously very unlikely and equates approximately to the risk of driving your car on the motorway). As with any surgery there is the small risk of infection as well.

Sometimes no cause for your pelvic pain is found at the laparoscopy and indeed if your ultrasound is normal there is a 4 out of 5 chance that your laparoscopy will be normal.

Conclusion:

Most laparoscopies are performed as a day case although sometimes it may be necessary to keep you in overnight if more extensive surgery is involved or planned. You should aim to take around 5-7 days off work.

I hope you find the above information helpful. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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