

# Laparoscopic Surgery The Keyhole Magic



**Dr. Rishma Dhillon Pai**

**Consultant Gynaecologist : Jaslok & Lilavati Hospitals, Mumbai.**

Gone are the days when surgery meant a major operation with big cuts and stitches and long hospital stay with prolonged rest and recovery time.

With the advent of 'Keyhole' or 'buttonhole' surgery (Laparoscopy) many of the surgeries for women which required major cuts on the stomach are now done with 2-3 cuts of 1/2 to 1 cm each.

Fibroids are usually non cancerous solid tumours in the womb (uterus). These can cause heavy irregular menses, pain, pressure and heaviness of the lower abdomen in many cases. These tumours are very common and are seen even in young women. These fibroids unfortunately cannot be treated with medicines but have to be removed surgically if they are causing problems. Laparoscopic surgery can remove even large fibroids with minimal cuts on the stomach wall. The entire surgery is done by watching the procedure on a television screen and operating with a camera in the abdomen. The large fibroids are made into small pieces by means of a special machine called the morcellator and so can be removed through a small opening.

Patients who are older and have fibroids or problem of heavy bleeding during periods or some other reason to remove the womb can also be treated by laparoscopic surgery. The womb (uterus) can be removed by this procedure. The patient's hospitalization is less and recovery is very fast. Prolonged rest and absence from work is not needed.

Ovarian cysts are common and can occur in any age group. They may be simple cysts, endometriosis or dermoid cysts where water, blood or thick pus like material can fill in the ovary. These cysts are best treated by laparoscopic surgery.

Endometriosis is a major problem in young women

where dark, thick blood accumulates in the ovary or around the womb and causes pain and often inability to conceive. It damages the tubes and ovaries and can cause the intestines to stick together. This problem can also be treated by keyhole surgery.

Infertility (inability to become pregnant) is on the rise and often one of the necessary investigations is to put a camera through the belly button into the pelvis and check to see if the tubes are open and if the uterus and ovaries are normal. If any problem is detected it can be treated at the same time.

Keyhole surgery is here to stay. More and more operations are now being done by this method though there is still a role for traditional open surgery in certain cases.

**I have been married for 4 years and have not become pregnant yet. I am very keen to have a baby soon. My gynaecologist has told me to have a laparoscopy. What exactly is it and is it a painful procedure? Heena**

If a couple is unable to conceive after one year of trying, basic tests of both should be done. The most important is semen test of the husband and checking to see if the tubes are open, in the woman. This checking of the tubes is done by laparoscopy. Laparoscopy is a simple short procedure in which a thin tube with a camera is introduced into the stomach through a 1 cm cut near the belly button (umbilicus). The entire womb and tubes can be checked by this. If there is any problem such as fibroid, cyst, endometriosis etc, it can be operated at the same time. The Diagnostic laparoscopy takes 20 minutes to perform and the patient can go home from hospital in a few hours. There is not much pain as the procedure is done under general anaesthesia.

**For free consultation:**  
[askthedoctor@rediffmail.com](mailto:askthedoctor@rediffmail.com)