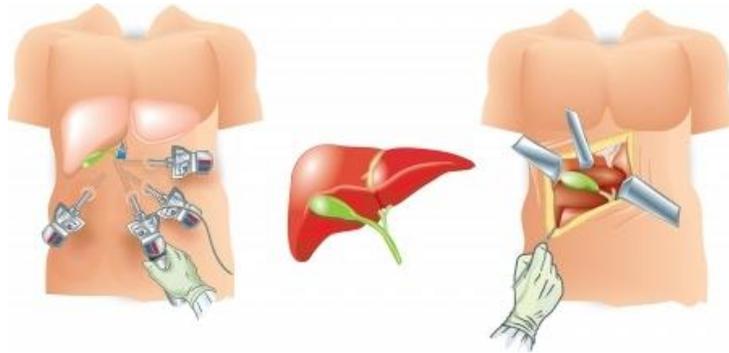


Gallbladder Surgery Information

Cholecystectomy = Gallbladder Removal



What is a gallbladder?

The gallbladder is located under the liver on the right side of upper abdomen. It stores bile, which is released after eating fatty foods to aid in the breakdown of fat. Cholecystitis refers to inflammation of the gallbladder. The most common cause of gallbladder disease is gallstones. The formation of gallstones blocks the bile from leaving the gallbladder, causing inflammation. This blockage can cause you to have right upper abdominal pain, fever, nausea and/or vomiting.

Surgery

A cholecystectomy is the surgical removal of the gallbladder and is one of the most common abdominal surgeries. Removing the gallbladder can be done with one incision large enough to remove the gallbladder. Most commonly however, surgery is done laparoscopically, by making three or four small incisions. A laparoscope is a thin flexible tube with a light at the end of the scope and a tiny camera. A laparoscope is placed one of the incisions and carbon dioxide gas is used to lift the abdominal wall. This helps the surgeon remove the gallbladder safely. Surgery is done under general anesthesia and the surgery may take one hour or longer.

Day of Surgery

You will be asked to come to Memorial Hospital 90 minutes before your surgery. You will come to the Surgery Admitting Department. The nurses will start an IV, review your medications, medical history, and get you ready for surgery. An anesthesiologist will talk to you about your sedation during surgery. You are encouraged to have 1 or 2 family members to stay with you during this time. When you go to surgery, your family or friend will be asked to wait in the Family Waiting area. They will be updated throughout your surgery.

After Surgery

When surgery ends, you will be taken to the Recovery Room where your vital signs and symptoms caused by the surgery will be monitored. Please help the nurses know by reporting pain, nausea or any other symptom of discomfort. You will be ready for discharge when your vital signs are stable and you are answering questions appropriately. One family member will be invited to come to the Recovery Room and instructions will be given to both of you. Please make sure you take this time to ask all your questions. You will go home with a prescription for pain medication.

When should you call your doctor?

You should call your doctor if you start having pain, nausea, and vomiting not controlled by the medication prescribed or if you develop signs and/or symptoms of infection. This includes fever, chills, increased redness, swelling or green, yellow or brown drainage from your incision.