Surgical procedure

Laparoscopic Abdominal Surgery for Crohn's Disease

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
This surgical fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional. If your injury or illness is critical or life threatening, call triple zero (000). To speak to a registered nurse, call healthdirect on 1800 022 222.

Notes and questions to bring to your doctor

For more help with what to ask your doctor, visit healthdirect.gov.au/question-builder
This document will give you information about laparoscopic abdominal surgery for Crohn’s disease. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

**What is Crohn’s disease?**
Crohn’s disease causes inflammation of your bowel. The disease most often affects the end part of your small bowel (see figure 1). However, it can affect any part of your bowel.

![Figure 1: Crohn’s disease at the terminal ileum](image)

**What complications can happen?**

1. **General complications**
   - Pain
   - Bleeding
   - Infection of the surgical site (wound)
   - Unsightly scarring
   - Developing a hernia in the scar
   - Blood clots
   - Chest infection
   - Difficulty passing urine

2. **Specific complications**
   - Damage to structures such as your bowel, bladder or blood vessels
   - Developing a hernia near one of the cuts
   - Surgical emphysema
   - Anastomotic leak
   - Continued bowel paralysis
   - Damage to other structures inside your abdomen
   - Injury to your bowel
   - Tissues can join together in an abnormal way

**How soon will I recover?**
You should be able to go home after 5 to 10 days. It may take up to three months for you to recover fully. Most people feel much better after the diseased part of their bowel has been removed. Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Crohn’s disease sometimes comes back and affects another part of your bowel.

**Summary**
Crohn’s disease causes inflammation of your bowel. Surgery is usually recommended if medication fails to improve your symptoms.
Acknowledgements
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