

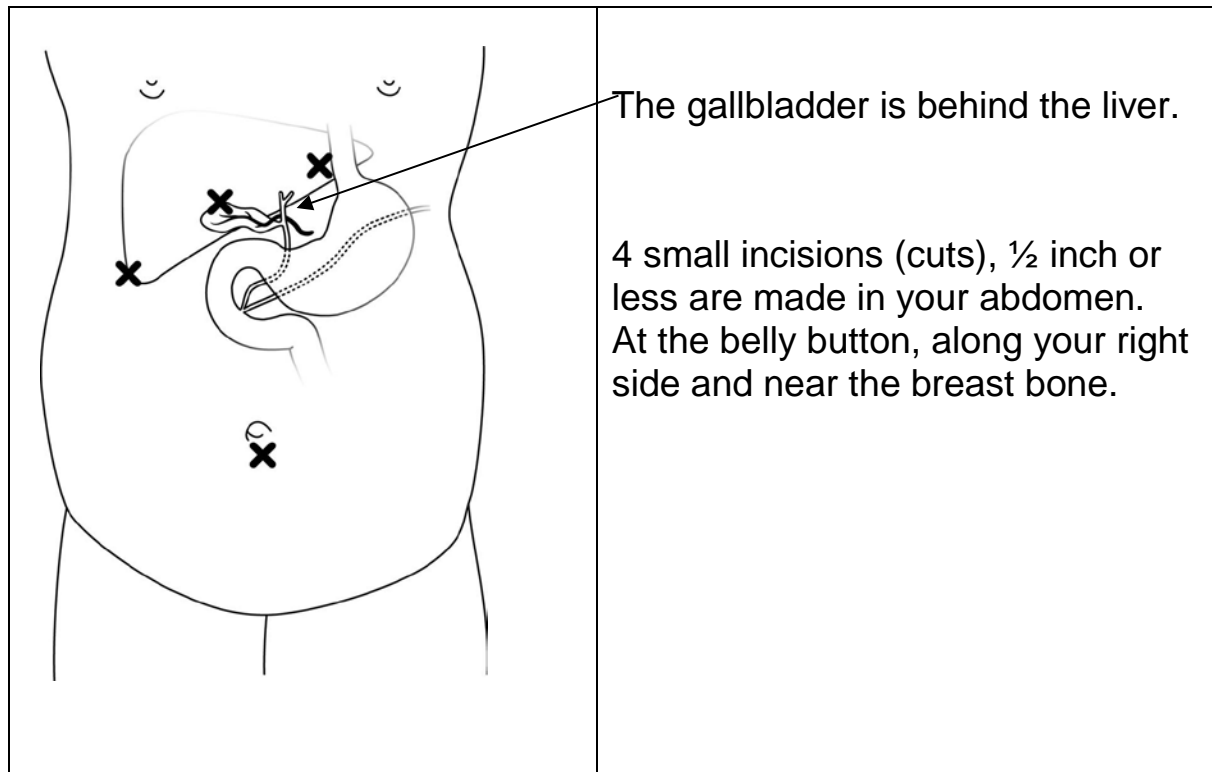
## Laparoscopic cholecystectomy

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You will be having surgery to remove your gallbladder. The gallbladder stores bile, which is made in the liver. Bile plays a part in digesting the fat in your food. Bile will still be present after your gallbladder is removed.

### What is laparoscopic cholecystectomy?

Laparoscopic cholecystectomy is surgery to remove your gallbladder.



**Reasons for incisions:**

- To put gas (CO<sub>2</sub>) to inflate your abdomen, so there is room for the instruments.
- To insert a video camera so the surgeon can look around.
- For other instruments that hold, move and remove the gallbladder.

This type of gallbladder surgery takes about 1½ hours.

**Open Method**

For a small number of people the gallbladder cannot be removed this way. Sometimes during the laparoscopic cholecystectomy, the doctor decides for safety reasons to remove your gallbladder by the open method.

In the open method the gallbladder is removed through a 6 to 8 inches (15 to 20 cm) incision in your abdomen — just under your ribs on the right side. After surgery you will go to the Post Anesthetic Care Unit, or PACU, until you are fully awake. From PACU you will go to the hospital unit. Your stay in hospital will be about 2 to 4 days. Your recovery period will be about 6 to 8 weeks.

**Preparing before surgery**

Keep up with your regular activities, exercise and eat a balanced diet. You want to be as strong as you can before you have the surgery. Arrange for someone to help you around the house, and do errands for you when you come home after surgery.

Follow the pre-op checklist and medication instructions that were given to you during your pre-op visit. Your belly button needs to be cleaned before your surgery. Wash it with soap and warm water the night before your surgery. It is very important to clean the inside of your belly button very well.

**Follow-up appointment**

Before you go home you will be given information about your follow-up appointment with your surgeon.

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## After laparoscopic surgery

### In the hospital

- After surgery you will go to the Post Anesthetic Care Unit, or PACU, until you are fully awake.
- Then you will go to Same Day Surgery, or SDS, until you are ready to go home. You will go home about 3 to 5 hours after your surgery.
- You will need a ride home and someone to stay with you for the night.

If you feel pain or an upset stomach, your nurse will give you medication to help you. The gas from laparoscopic surgery may cause some abdominal or shoulder pain. Walking and taking your pain medication regularly can help relieve these pains. You will be given clear fluids to drink.

### At home

- Rest the day of your surgery. Then, gradually resume your normal activities. The time off work can vary depending on your type of work. Talk to your surgeon about this.
- Take the pain medication suggested by your surgeon. Your pain should become less each day.
- Other ways to relieve pain are:
  - drinking warm fluids
  - walking
  - relaxing by listening to music or deep breathing
- You may resume your normal diet at home when you feel like it. Try to drink as much as you can until you are eating again. This will also help prevent constipation.

### Incision care

- You may shower 24 to 48 hours after your surgery. Use a mild soap and pat the incisions dry. Each incision should be a dry closed line. Your incisions may be covered with tape. Try to keep the tape clean and dry. If the tape falls off, you can leave it off. You can have a tub bath after your incisions have healed.
- If you have stitches they will either dissolve on their own or you will need to have them removed. When you leave the hospital you will be instructed about your stitches and follow-up appointment.

**Call your surgeon if you notice ANY of these problems:**

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**Fever**      • Your temperature is 38°C (100°F) or higher.

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**Incision**      • Pain in your incision that does not get better with medication.  
• Your incision is coming open, bleeding, draining or has yellow, green or smelly discharge.  
• The skin around your incision is red or swollen.  
• You are concerned about your incision.





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**Abdomen**      • You are constipated, or no bowel movement in 3 days.  
• You are vomiting or have diarrhea.  
• You have pain in your abdomen or feel sick to your stomach.

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**Skin**      • You notice that the whites of your eyes or your skin looks yellow.

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**Other**       You have pain or tenderness in your leg (thigh or calf) with swelling, redness or warmth.  
 You have trouble breathing, chest pain or cough up blood.  
 You have lightheadedness or dizziness that does not go away.  
 You have a rapid heart beat (palpitations), facial flushing, sweating.

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If you have concerns about your surgery, do not wait for your follow-up appointment. Call your surgeon. If you are unable to reach the surgeon, go to Emergency.



**Problems marked with this sign are emergencies.  
Call 911 or go to Emergency.**

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