



Education

Laparoscopy for Liver Biopsy

What is a laparoscopy for liver biopsy?

A laparoscopy for liver biopsy is a procedure in which your health care provider uses a laparoscope to look at your liver and take samples of the liver for diagnosis. A laparoscope is a thin metal tube with a light and tiny camera. The camera shows a magnified view of the abdominal organs on a TV monitor. The surgeon uses this view to take samples of the liver with tiny tools.

When is it used?

You may have had other medical tests that suggested something is wrong with your liver. Your health care provider may suspect it is cancer. Your provider may use this procedure to learn more about your liver problem.

Examples of alternatives are:

- open abdominal surgery
- having a needle biopsy guided by a CT scan
- choosing not to have treatment, while recognizing the risks of your condition.

Ask your provider about these choices.

How do I prepare for a laparoscopy?

Plan for your care and recovery after the operation. Allow for time to rest and try to find other people to help you with your day-to-day duties.

Follow your health care provider's instructions about not smoking before and after the procedure. Smokers heal more slowly after surgery. They are also more likely to have breathing problems during surgery. For this reason, if you are a smoker, you should quit at least 2 weeks before the procedure. It is best to quit 6 to 8 weeks before surgery. Also, your wounds will heal much better if you do not smoke after the surgery.

If you need a minor pain reliever in the week before surgery, choose acetaminophen rather than aspirin, ibuprofen, or naproxen. This helps avoid extra bleeding during surgery. If you are taking daily aspirin for a medical condition, ask your provider if you need to stop taking it before your surgery.

Follow any other instructions your provider gives you. Eat a light meal, such as soup or salad, the night before the procedure. Do not eat or drink anything after midnight and the morning before the procedure. Do not even drink coffee, tea, or water.

What happens during the procedure?

You are given a general anesthetic, which relaxes your muscles, puts you to sleep, and prevents you from feeling pain.

Your peritoneal cavity, which holds most of your abdominal and pelvic organs, is inflated with carbon dioxide gas. This expands your peritoneal cavity like a balloon and helps your health care provider see your liver. The surgeon makes a small cut (incision) near your bellybutton, puts in the gas, and puts a laparoscope through the cut. The surgeon puts another tool through a second small cut in your abdomen. The laparoscope is used to look at the liver and guide the other tool. If the surgeon finds a growth that should not be there, he or she may use the other tool to take a sample of the growth or remove it. Then the surgeon removes the laparoscope and the tool and sews up the

openings in the abdominal wall and bellybutton area. The sample of tissue is sent to the lab for tests.

What happens after the procedure?

You may stay in the hospital for a few hours or overnight to recover. The anesthetic may cause sleepiness or grogginess for a while. You may have some shoulder pain, feel bloated, or find a change in bowel habits for a few days. You may not be able to urinate right away and may have a catheter (a small tube) placed into your bladder through the urethra (the tube from the bladder to the outside) to drain the urine.

You should avoid heavy activity such as lifting. You should ask your health care provider how much you should lift, what other steps you should take, and when you should come back for a checkup.

What are the benefits of this procedure?

This surgical procedure may help your health care provider make a more accurate diagnosis and determine the best treatment.

What are the risks associated with this procedure?

- There are some risks when you have general anesthesia. Discuss these risks with your health care provider.
- The abdominal organs, glands, intestines, or blood vessels may be damaged. You may need abdominal surgery to repair them at the time of the laparoscopy.
- The lining of the abdominal cavity may become inflamed.
- You may have infection or bleeding.
- You may have some pain after the procedure.

You should ask your provider how these risks apply to you.

When should I call my health care provider?

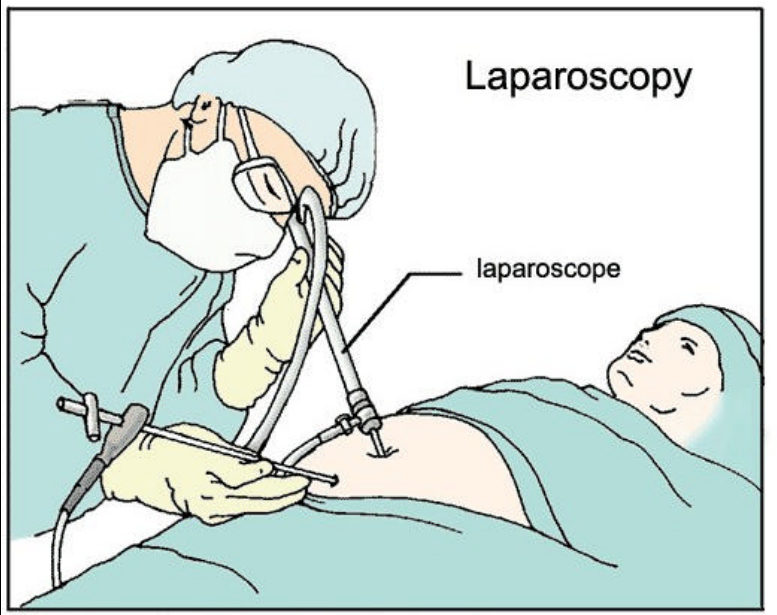
Call your provider right away if:

- You develop a fever.
- You have redness, swelling, pain, or drainage from the incisions.
- You become dizzy and faint.
- You have chest pain.
- You have nausea and vomiting.
- You become short of breath.
- You have abdominal pain or swelling that gets worse.

Call during office hours if:

- You have questions about the procedure or its result.
- You want to make another appointment.

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