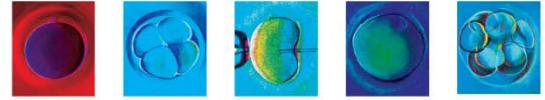


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# FERTILITY FACT SHEET

San Ramon / Orinda / San Jose

## DIAGNOSTIC & THERAPEUTIC LAPAROSCOPY

Laparoscopy is an outpatient procedure where patients are admitted 1-2 hours before the surgery and go home the same day. When the surgery is more involved the patient will occasionally stay overnight for observation.

The surgery is done under a general anesthetic (you will be asleep) and special instruments are placed through one or several small incisions. The laparoscope is a tiny camera that makes this procedure possible and is generally placed through your belly-button. It has a high-definition lens system and fiber-optic light source. Carbon dioxide gas is used inside of your abdomen to allow the physician to view structures clearly.

If needed, other instruments can be inserted through additional small 5-10mm (less than ½ inch) incisions. This allows the use of cautery, scissors, biopsy instruments, irrigation and lasers in order to safely complete the surgery. Laparoscopy allows surgeons to be able to perform complex laparoscopic procedures such as removing fallopian tubes, ovarian cysts, and ectopic pregnancies without the need for making large abdominal incisions. In the cases of very complex laparoscopy, such as removing large uterine fibroids or pelvic masses, specially trained surgeons may use the assistance of a robotic system to ensure a safe procedure (see our separate sheet describing Robot-Assisted Laparoscopy).

Once the surgery is completed the instruments are removed, the incisions are closed with small absorbable sutures, and band-aids are placed over the incisions. Occasionally a small amount carbon dioxide remains within the abdomen for a short time. This gas can cause pain in your shoulders and/or upper back. If you have this type pain, you should lie down flat in bed (no pillow) for several hours, and this will usually resolve this discomfort.

You are normally discharged home within a few hours after completion of the laparoscopy. It will be necessary for someone to drive you home. You may return to your normal activities as soon as the effects of the anesthesia and medication wear off. You may have some discomfort – incision pain, irritation from the carbon dioxide, or sore throat from the tube through which the anesthesia was given. Although each person reacts differently, you will probably not have discomfort for more than a few days.

Complications of laparoscopy are seldom seen, but can include bleeding, infection, injury to bowel and/or bladder or anesthetic complications. Rarely, it is necessary to make a larger incision into your abdomen to complete a procedure or correct a complication. This could necessitate your being admitted to a hospital for several days for recovery.

In summary, diagnostic/therapeutic laparoscopy is a generally safe, out-patient procedure which allows the infertility surgeon/gynecologist to perform a variety of procedures with rapid patient recovery and return to normal activities. Complications of the procedure are rarely encountered.