

Laparo-endogastric surgery

**Understanding NICE guidance –
information for people considering
the procedure, and for the public**

December 2003



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Copies of this booklet can be ordered from the NHS Response Line; telephone 0870 1555 455 and quote reference number N0377. A version in Welsh and English is also available, reference number N0378. Mae fersiwn yn Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg ar gael hefyd, rhif cyfeirnod N0378. The NICE interventional procedures guidance on which this information is based is available from the NICE website (www.nice.org.uk). Copies can also be obtained from the NHS Response Line, reference number N0376.

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About this information

This information describes the guidance that the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has issued to the NHS on a procedure called laparo-endogastric surgery. It is not a complete description of what is involved in the procedure – the patient's healthcare team should describe it in detail.

NICE has looked at whether laparo-endogastric surgery is safe enough and works well enough for it to be used routinely for the treatment of certain growths or ulcers in the stomach.

To produce this guidance, NICE has:

- looked at the results of studies on the safety of laparo-endogastric surgery and how well it works
- asked experts for their opinion
- asked the views of the organisations that speak for the healthcare professionals and the patients and carers who will be affected by this guidance.

This guidance is part of NICE's work on 'interventional procedures' (see 'Further information' on page 10).

About laparo-endogastric surgery

Laparo-endogastric surgery is a method of carrying out surgery from inside the stomach. It avoids having to cut away all of the wall of the stomach, as happens when conventional methods of surgery on the stomach are used. Laparo-endogastric surgery can be used to treat problems such as some kinds of growths inside the stomach and some kinds of stomach ulcers.

To carry out laparo-endogastric surgery a surgeon passes a small flexible telescope (called an endoscope) through the oesophagus (gullet) into the stomach, so he or she can see inside it. The surgeon uses a thin flexible tube (a laparoscope) passed through a small cut in the abdomen to perform the operation inside the stomach.

How well it works

What the studies said

Only a few small studies had looked at this procedure and it was not possible to decide whether it works as well as conventional treatments.

What the experts said

The experts agreed that this procedure is currently too new and uncommon to decide if it works well. Only a very small number of centres around the world use this technique and not many surgeons are trained in it. The experts also thought that, because it can be difficult to see growths in the stomach clearly when carrying out the operation, it might be difficult to be sure all of a cancerous growth had been removed.

Risks and possible problems

What the studies said

The studies reported that people who had this surgery didn't have many complications. However, because the numbers of people in the studies were so small, it was not possible to reliably decide how safe laparo-endogastric surgery is.

What the experts said

The experts noted that possible complications included bleeding and infection after surgery, but that these were rare.

What has NICE decided?

NICE has decided that, if a doctor wants to carry out laparo-endogastric surgery, he or she should make sure that the patient understands what is involved and that there are still uncertainties over the safety of the procedure and how well it works. There should be special arrangements in place so that the patient only agrees (consents) to the procedure after this discussion has taken place. There should also be special arrangements in place for monitoring what happens when a person has laparo-endogastric surgery.

Laparo-endogastric surgery should only be performed by doctors expert in laparoscopic surgery who have seen this procedure performed before.

What the decision means for you

Your doctor may have offered you laparo-endogastric surgery. NICE has considered this procedure because it is relatively new. NICE has decided that there are uncertainties about the benefits and risks of laparo-endogastric surgery that you need to understand before you agree to it. Your doctor should discuss the benefits and risks with you. Some of these benefits and risks may be described above.

Further information

You have the right to be fully informed and to share in decision-making about the treatment you receive. You may want to discuss this guidance with the doctors and nurses looking after you.

You can visit the NICE website (www.nice.org.uk) for further information about the National Institute for Clinical Excellence and the Interventional Procedures Programme. A copy of the full guidance on laparo-endogastric surgery is on the NICE website (www.nice.org.uk/IPG025guidance), or you can order a copy from the website or by telephoning the NHS Response Line on 0870 1555 455 and quoting reference number N0376. The evidence that NICE considered in developing this guidance is also available from the NICE website.

If you want more information on stomach problems or endoscopy, a good starting point is NHS Direct, telephone 0845 46 47, or NHS Direct Online (www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk).

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