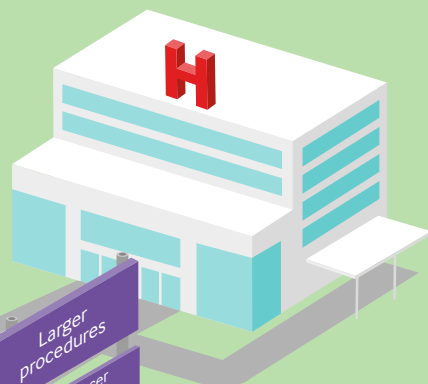




Laparoscopy has revolutionised the field of abdominal surgery over the past thirty years, allowing surgeons to perform operations without the need for a large abdominal incision. Recovery times are typically much shorter than for open surgery, and may be as short as 1-2 weeks, depending on the procedure that has been performed. This infographic shows some of the key milestones and hazards along the road to recovery



Smaller procedures
 Appendicectomy
 Cholecystectomy
 Hernia repair

Larger procedures
 Larger cancer procedures

Pain
 Should subside after 24 hours. Worsening post-operative pain suggests a potential abdominal complication, and the patient requires urgent assessment

Swellings
 May indicate:
 Abscess Seroma Haematoma

Analgesics
 Smaller procedures:
 Regular for 1st week
 As required after
 Larger procedures:
 Regular analgesia may be needed for longer

Driving
 Before driving, patients need to be able to:
 Apply an emergency brake
 Look in their blind spot
 React quickly enough
 Smaller procedures:
 May be able to drive after 1-2 weeks
 Larger procedures:
 May have to wait longer

Infection
 Antibiotics may be required for patients with wounds that are:
 Swollen Tender
 Red Oozing Hot
 Refer patient urgently to hospital if there is concern about deeper infection

Return to work
 Usually an individual decision, based on patient's occupation and operation performed
 Smaller procedures:
 May only need 2 weeks off work
 Larger procedures:
 A longer break may be needed
 Consider gradual return to work

Heavy lifting
 Patients advised initially not to lift anything heavier than a kettle or a shopping bag until:
 Smaller procedures: 1-2 weeks
 Larger procedures: 4 weeks

Travel
 Patients usually advised not to fly for 24 hours after laparoscopy, and to use thromboembolic stockings if flying within one month of surgery

Thromboprophylaxis
 For 28 days after cancer or bariatric procedures

