



PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

ROBOT- ASSISTED GYNAECOLOGY SURGERY

This leaflet is to help to explain what robot-assisted means for your surgical treatment. Most surgical treatments in gynaecology inside the abdomen are treated in one of three ways, your actual operation (for example hysterectomy, excision of fibroid, treating endometriosis) would not change irrespective of the approach used:

- Open approach: which means a cut in the wall of your tummy which is usually 10 - 15 cm in length but can be longer depending on the type of operation you need.
- Laparoscopic approach: also known as keyhole surgery, this is where small cuts usually shorter than 1 cm are made and you could need between 3-5 of these.
- Robot-assisted approach is another keyhole surgery technique. It is a newer, more advanced way of performing keyhole surgery using robotic arms that are controlled by the surgeon

WHAT IS ROBOT- ASSISTED SURGERY?

The robot is used by the surgeon to improve the quality of surgery performed. The robot does not perform the surgery by itself. The surgeon performs the surgery, but the robot is a tool used by the surgeon to help perform the procedure in a way that allows more controlled and precise movements during the operation.

Robot assisted surgery is a laparoscopic (keyhole) technique that the surgeon performs by using a robotic console during the operation. Your surgeon is in the same room but sits away from you at the console, where they control the robot's arms during the operation.

The robot has four arms. One holds a high-magnification 3D camera, which is inserted into your abdomen through one of the keyholes. This allows your surgeon to see inside. The other robotic arms hold various instruments, which your surgeon will use to carry out the operation. The instruments are smaller than those used for conventional open surgery.

You will be put to sleep using general anaesthesia for the surgery.



This picture shows a surgeon seated at the robotic console controlling the arms of the robot.

To the right of the picture, a short distance from the surgeon, is a patient on the operating table with the robot arms inserted through keyhole incisions.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF ROBOTIC SURGERY?

The following are some advantages for robot-assisted surgery compared with open approach:

- Shorter hospital stays
- Faster recovery after leaving the hospital
- Quicker return to normal activities, such as driving
- Less pain
- Reduced risk of wound infection
- Less blood loss meaning a reduced need for a blood transfusion
- Reduced scarring
- Less pain and fatigue for surgeons

When compared with the traditional (non-robotic) keyhole method, robot-assisted surgery is helpful to many patients in reducing the chance of needing to change the operation to an open operation during the surgery, which would mean a longer stay in hospital. It also allows surgeons to perform keyhole surgery on patients in whom this type of surgery is not usually possible using a traditional laparoscopic (keyhole) approach.

WHY HAVE I BEEN OFFERED ROBOTIC- ASSISTED SURGERY?

You have been offered this type of surgery because your surgeon considers that this will be beneficial to you in comparison to the alternative options of open surgery or traditional laparoscopic (keyhole) surgery.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS?

The possible risks and complications of robotic-assisted surgery are no different from those that can happen with traditional laparoscopic (keyhole) surgery. These potential risks/complications are:

- The need to convert to an open operation during the surgery
- Discomfort around the shoulder area due to trapped gas under the ribcage following surgery. This is an expected short-term side-effect following all types of keyhole surgery and usually settles within a few days as the excess gas is gradually re-absorbed by your body.

- Nerve or muscular problems due to being in the required position for keyhole surgery on the operating table for longer periods of time.
- Hernias (bulges) at the site of the surgical incisions.

Other potential complications are the same as those that can occur with any type of non-keyhole surgery (e.g. infection, blood clots). Complications and risks of surgery along with the benefits of your surgery will be discussed with you in full by your surgeon and before you provide written consent for your operation.

IS THERE ANYTHING I SHOULD DO TO PREPARE FOR MY SURGERY?

Before your operation, an appointment will be made for you to come to the hospital for a pre-assessment. This is performed for all types of operation. If you have not already signed your consent form, you will see a doctor who will fully explain the operation to you and answer any questions you may have.

At this appointment, you will have some tests and a nurse will discuss your operation again with you, to ensure that you fully understand why you need the operation and what is going to happen to you. If you have any questions, then please write them down and bring them to the appointment with you. Make sure that all of your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and that you fully understand what is going to happen to you.

If you are a smoker, you should stop smoking or reduce the number of cigarettes you smoke in the days leading up to the date of your operation. This could reduce the risk of chest problems as smoking makes your lungs sensitive to the anaesthetic used. If you need further information about stopping smoking, please contact your GP or Smokefree NHS on 0800 022 4332.

You should also eat a healthy diet. If you feel well enough, take some gentle exercise before the operation as this will also help speed your recovery afterwards.

Before you come into hospital for your operation, try to organise things ready for when you come home. If you have a freezer, stock it with easy-to-prepare food. Arrange for relatives and friends to do your heavy work (such as changing your bedding, vacuuming, and gardening) and to look after your children, if necessary.

If you require any further information or clarification, including clarification of terminology, please do not hesitate to talk to one of the doctors or nurses, who will be happy to discuss your concerns with you.

CONTACT DETAILS



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