

PATIENT RISK INFORMATION

We believe that anyone facing surgery should be fully aware of the options including the risks and benefits of each approach to gallbladder removal.

All surgery presents risk. Any procedure using LESS is minimally invasive surgery, but as with any surgery, complications may occur. Possible complications include the risks associated with the medications and methods used during surgery, the risks associated with any surgical procedure (up to and including death), and the risks associated with the patient’s medical condition and history.

Risks specific to LESS include the possibility of conversion to a standard laparoscopic or open procedure and the specific risks associated with those procedures. Your individual risk can be determined only in consultation with your surgeon. Not all patients will be candidates for single incision (single port) surgery. Only a medical professional can determine if a procedure using LESS is right for you.



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT GALLBLADDER SURGERY

Your doctor or surgeon will help you determine what treatment is best for you. Some factors that your doctor will consider before surgery are obesity, history of prior surgery, and any underlying medical conditions. Some of these issues can affect the optimal treatment plan and recovery from surgery.

- Why do I need my gallbladder removed, and how soon do I need to have this done?
- What type of surgery is appropriate for my symptoms?
- Am I a candidate for single-incision LESS surgery?
- Are you trained in the LESS procedure?
- What type of anesthesia is necessary for this surgery and how long will I be under anesthesia?
- How long will I need to be in the hospital or surgery center?



- What should I do to be prepared for the surgery?
- What can I expect after surgery?
- Will I have scars, how many and how large will they be?
- How soon will I be able to return to work or pursue my normal daily activities?
- Is this procedure more expensive than other surgery options?
- Will my insurance cover this procedure?
- Will I have a higher co-payment with this type of surgery?



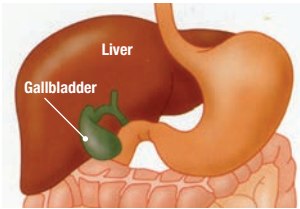
LESS IS MORE:  
A MAJOR  
ADVANCEMENT  
IN MINIMALLY  
INVASIVE SURGERY  
FOR GALLBLADDER  
REMOVAL

# LESS CHOLECYSTECTOMY

## WHAT DOES THE GALLBLADDER DO?

The gallbladder is a small pouch-like organ that stores bile produced by the liver. After eating, the gallbladder is signaled to squeeze bile into the small intestine to help digest fat. Bile is important for digestion, but the gallbladder itself, is not an essential organ.

The most common reason to remove the gallbladder is due to the formation of gallstones which can cause nausea, pain, and inflammation of the gallbladder (cholecystitis) that is accompanied by severe pain and fever. Once the gallbladder is removed, these symptoms most often resolve.



## WHAT IS GALLBLADDER SURGERY?

If you are facing gallbladder surgery, you are not alone. Approximately one million gallbladder surgeries (called cholecystectomy) are performed every year and occur more often in women than men.

Today, most gallbladder surgeries are performed through a series of small incisions made in the belly called laparoscopic surgery. For gallbladder surgery, four small incisions are usually made. Compared with open surgery which involves a larger incision, patients can often benefit from a faster recovery, a shorter hospital stay, experience less pain after surgery, and finally, return to normal daily living activities sooner.

In most circumstances, laparoscopic surgery is the preferred method to remove the gallbladder. However, in a small percentage of cases (roughly 5%), open surgery may be necessary depending upon your individual circumstances. Your doctor can help you to understand the best approach to removing your gallbladder.

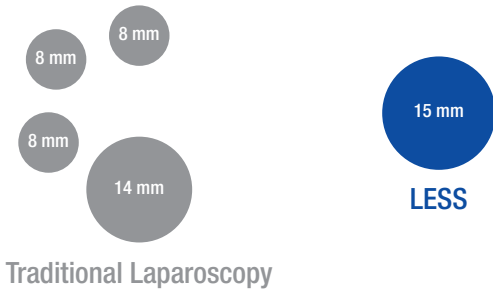
## LESS GALLBLADDER SURGERY: A SIGNIFICANT ADVANCEMENT IN MINIMALLY INVASIVE SURGERY

A more recent advancement in gallbladder surgery is called Laparo-Endoscopic Single Site Surgery, or LESS, which is now being performed nationwide by trained surgeons. This approach to gallbladder removal requires only one small incision about half an inch long in the belly button (also called the umbilicus). The surgeon will insert a medical device called an access port into this incision to create a round opening about the size of a dime. The surgeon then performs the complete procedure

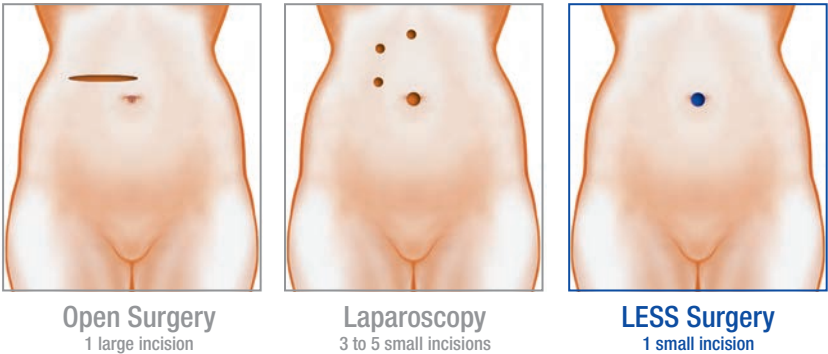
by inserting a flexible tip instrument for viewing (video laparoscope) and surgical instruments through the access port. Once the surgery is completed and the port removed, only a small scar is left behind which is hidden in the contours of the belly button.

In addition to a better cosmetic result, LESS cholecystectomy may extend the benefits of laparoscopic surgery as each surgical incision has an inherent risk of bleeding, infection, pain and scarring (one incision versus three to four incisions).

## COMPARISON OF CHOLECYSTECTOMY INCISIONS (Actual Size)



## REDUCTION OF INVASIVENESS



## SHARON'S STORY

Last year my doctor told me that my gallbladder needed to be removed. I was concerned because two years before, my husband had his gallbladder removed by standard laparoscopic surgery that required four incisions. I remember the pain he experienced for about two weeks and that he was not walking upright for about a week.

As a healthcare professional, I had heard about a technique that could be performed through a small incision in my belly button called LESS. Following my surgery, which was completed in less than an hour, I was in Recovery for two hours, dressed myself and was discharged the same day. During the car ride home I did not have any significant pain for the entire three-hour journey. The next day, I had some pain that was helped with the use of pain medication. My surgeon put me on lifting restrictions for two weeks (which is typical for any gallbladder procedure), but I was able to perform all “activities of daily living” quite comfortably almost immediately. In fact, I had surgery on a Thursday and was able to tolerate a 12-hour road trip on Saturday (two days after my operation) for a previously scheduled vacation to the beach.

Because I had LESS surgery to remove my gallbladder, my scar is not visible.

I am very outspoken when it comes to encouraging others to pursue LESS surgery for the gallbladder. I experienced so many benefits by having this type of procedure when compared to my husband's experience.

*Sharon R. Vincent*