

LAPAROSCOPY

Laparoscopy is the examination of, or surgery on, abdominal structures by means of illuminating (lighted) tubular instruments passed through a small incision in the wall of abdomen (“telescopic surgery”).

The surgical procedure that popularized laparoscopy is tubal sterilization. Over the past decade, laparoscopy has become increasingly popular for more complex gynecologic surgeries as well. Cystectomy (removal of an ovarian cyst), oophorectomy (surgery to remove an ovary), hysterectomy (removal of the uterus), and management of ectopic pregnancy are often performed laparoscopically.

As opposed to a laparotomy (traditional open surgery through an incision), laparoscopy involves performing surgery through a few very small holes in the abdomen. Through these hole, a camera and other instruments are placed, and the surgeons visualize the procedure on a television screen. With advances in camera optics (quality of the picture), laparoscopic instruments, and laparoscopic technique, many traditional operations can be performed entirely or partially in this fashion.