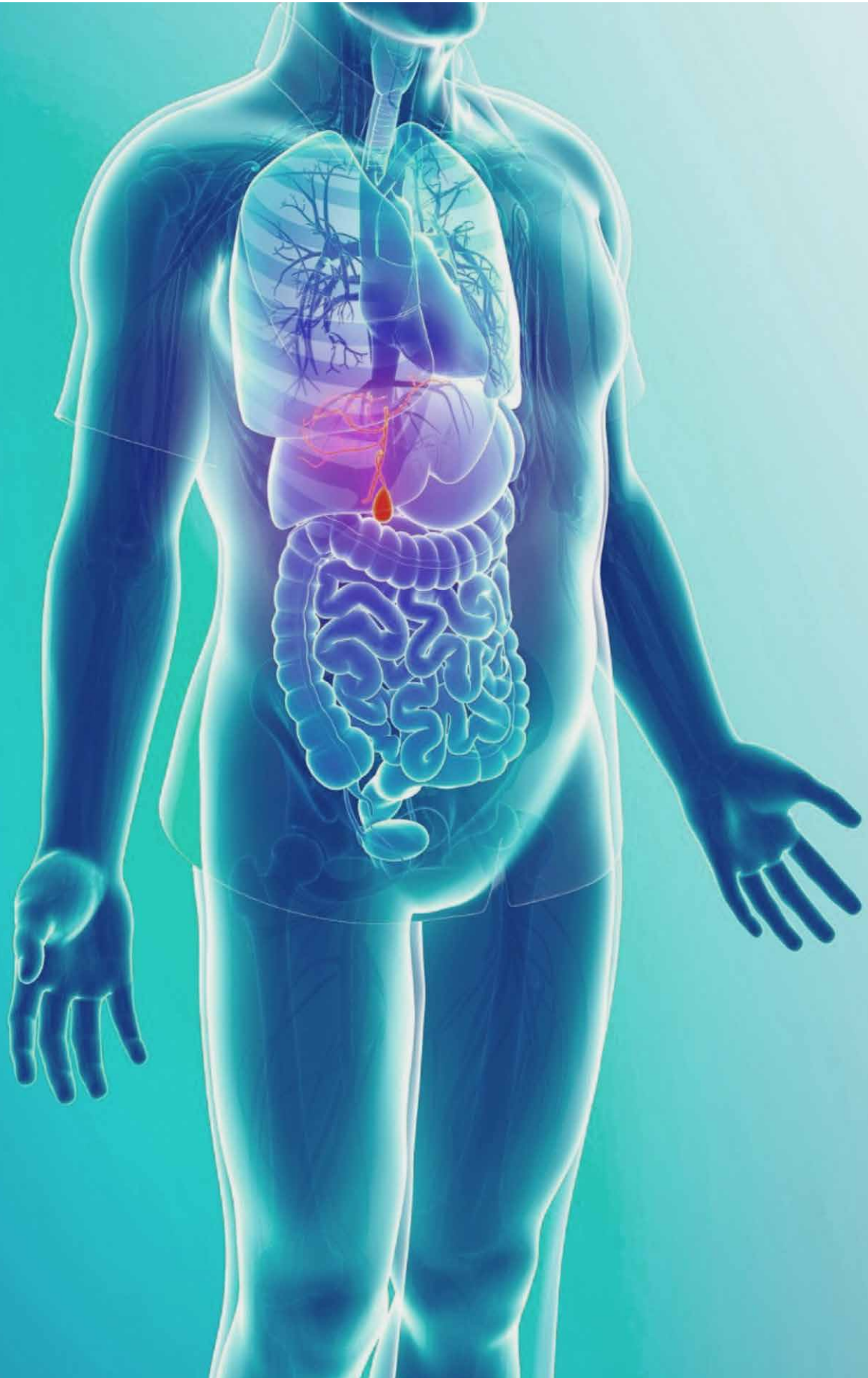


Auckland
Gallbladder
Surgery

Gallbladder Surgery

Information for Patients



What is gallbladder surgery?

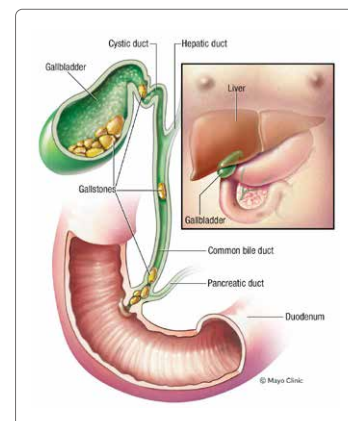
Gallbladder surgery (also known as a cholecystectomy) is the removal of the gallbladder. The gallbladder is a small, pear-shaped organ located under your liver in the upper right side of your abdomen. It serves as a storage pouch for bile, a fluid created by your liver to help with fat digestion.

Why have gallbladder surgery?

The most common reasons for gallbladder surgery include:

Gallstones

These are crystalized deposits of bile that form in your gallbladder. They can cause intense pain, inflammation, nausea and vomiting.



Gallstones in gallbladder

Cholecystitis

Inflammation of the gallbladder, often caused by gallstones.

Gallbladder polyps

Growths projecting from the gallbladder lining. Large polyps sometimes may be precancerous.

Pancreatitis

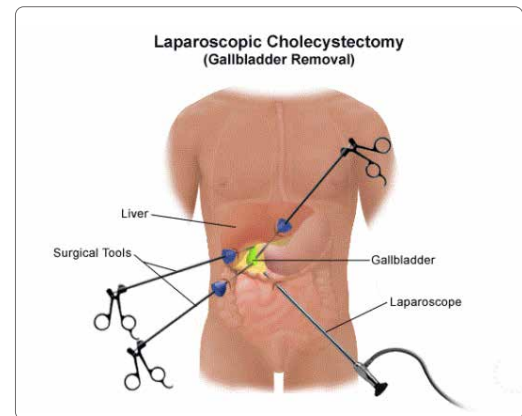
Inflammation of the pancreas which can be caused by gallstones.

Types of gallbladder surgery

Gallbladder surgery is commonly performed in two ways:

1. Laparoscopic cholecystectomy:

- This is the most common method of gallbladder removal.
- The surgeon makes small incisions in the abdomen and inserts a laparoscope (a thin tube with a camera) and surgical instruments to remove the gallbladder.
- Laparoscopic cholecystectomy is a minimally invasive procedure with shorter recovery times and less pain compared to open surgery.



Laparoscopic cholecystectomy

2. Open cholecystectomy:

- The surgeon makes a larger incision in the abdomen to access and remove the gallbladder.
- This method may be necessary if the laparoscopic approach is not possible due to complications like severe inflammation or scarring from previous surgeries.

What to expect with gallbladder surgery

Before Surgery

Discuss your medical history with your doctor. You may have blood tests, imaging tests (like an ultrasound), and a pre-op physical exam. Follow your doctor's instructions regarding fasting before surgery.

During Surgery

You'll be under general anesthesia. The surgery typically takes 1-2 hours.

After Surgery

You might experience some pain and discomfort. Many patients undergoing laparoscopic surgery go home the same day. After an open surgery you might need to stay in the hospital for a few days.

Recovery

Recovery times vary depending on the type of surgery, but most people can return to their usual routines within a few days.

Living without a gallbladder

You can live a normal, healthy life without a gallbladder. Once the gallbladder is removed, bile flows directly from the liver into the small intestine, enabling fat digestion. Some people may experience temporary changes in digestion after the surgery, such as loose stools, which usually get better over time.



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