

Appendicectomy

This information is for patients having an appendicectomy, and aims to summarise what a appendicectomy is, why they are performed and what the recovery period looks like.

What is an appendicectomy?

An appendicectomy is an operation to remove the appendix. It is often performed urgently when a person has an infected or inflamed appendix or appendicitis.

Why is an appendicectomy performed?

An appendicectomy is typically performed because the appendix is inflamed or has burst.

What does the recovery period look like following an appendicectomy?

Typically, recovering from an appendicectomy involves a short, overnight stay in the hospital, anywhere from 1-4 days. It is normal to feel weak or tired. Your stomach may be swollen or mildly painful. After a few days, you may slowly and gradually resume your regular activities and 3 weeks post-operatively, you can resume normal activities with no restrictions.

Activity:

- Rest when you feel tired.
- Walk a little each day, increasing the amount each day.
- For 2 weeks, avoid any having lifting or strenuous activity.
- You can resume showering 24-48 hours following your procedure. After showering, pat the incision dry. Do not take a bath for at least 2 weeks.
- Most people feel well enough to go back to work in 1-2 weeks.

Diet:

- You can eat a regular diet, but if your stomach is upset, eating plain foods can assist.
- Increase your water and fluid intake.
- You may note that your bowel movements are irregular, which is common pre-operatively. Avoid constipation and straining. Fibre supplements may help.

Incision Care:

- Keep the area clean and dry. It can be covered with gauze to avoid rubbing against clothing. Change the bandage daily.
- When coughing or moving, applying firm pressure to abdomen with a pillow can help to minimise the strain on the incision.

Medications:

- Take medications as instructed.
- Pain relief should be taken as needed.

In the period of 24-48 hours after your procedure you should:

- Avoid heavy lifting or strenuous activity.
- Drink plenty of liquids and eat high-fibre foods.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Do not drive or operate heavy machinery.
- Ensure someone you trust is available to assist you.
- You can return to a regular diet and increase your fibre and fluid intake.

Contact the rooms if you experience any of the following:

- Severe abdominal cramps
- Fever or chills
- Loss of appetite
- Swelling or redness around the incision
- Constipation or diarrhoea
- Vomiting

Remember to book your post-operative appointment with the rooms as stated on your discharge papers. If you have any queries whatsoever, please do not hesitate to call the clinic on 1300 008 883.