

CHOLECYSTECTOMY AND GALLSTONES

Up to 20 % of Adults in the U.S. Have Gallstones, But Only 1-3 % Develop Symptoms

Patients Only Require a Cholecystectomy If They Are Suffering From Symptoms

Cholecystectomies are very common procedures and are considered minimally invasive. These procedures are necessary to relieve a patient of complications of the gallbladder that could lead to more serious problems if left untreated.

It is important to understand why a patient needs a cholecystectomy and the symptoms related to gallbladder conditions. This resource also provides information on types of surgery and risks involved.

01 | Cause

There are several reasons why a patient may need to have a cholecystectomy to remove the gallbladder. A patient may suffer from gallstones in the gallbladder or bile duct, gallbladder inflammation, or pancreatic inflammation.

02 | Symptoms

Gallstone complications display symptoms of fever, nausea, bloating, jaundice and sharp pain in the abdomen. It can be difficult to distinguish these symptoms as gallbladder issues from many other conditions and problems. It is important to speak to your provider after having any concerning symptoms in order to prevent escalation of the problem into more serious conditions.

03 | Types of Surgery

There are two ways the surgery can be performed and they are:

Traditional “Open” Cholecystectomy – A six inch incision is made below the rib line in the abdomen. The surrounding muscle and tissue are pulled away to reveal the liver and gallbladder for removal.

Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy – Four small incisions are made in different locations around the abdomen. A camera is inserted through one of these opening while surgical tools are inserted through the others. The camera aids the surgeon in removing the gallbladder through the other incisions. An imaging test may be necessary to ensure the surgery was completed properly and no other action is necessary.

04 | Risks

With any surgery there are risks involved and it is important to be aware of possible complications. Each patients risks will vary based on the individuals overall health. Some risks include:

- Bile leak
- Bleeding
- Blood clots
- Heart problems
- Infection
- Injury to nearby structures, such as the bile duct, liver and small intestine
- Pancreatitis
- Pneumonia

For more information on digestive disorders, please visit: <https://www.emedicinehealth.com/digestive-disorders/center.htm>

Did You Know?

Gallstones are most common among overweight women

References

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/cholecystectomy/about/pac-20384818>

<https://www.webmd.com/digestive-disorders/surgery-for-gallstones#1>