

GS07lite Appendicectomy

Expires end of December 2019

A more detailed version of this procedure specific information sheet is available. Please ask your health practitioner at Joondalup Health Campus for a copy.

Write questions or notes here:



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This document will give you information about an appendicectomy. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is appendicitis?

Appendicitis means inflammation of your appendix (see figure 1). When your appendix is inflamed it causes pain and makes you feel unwell.

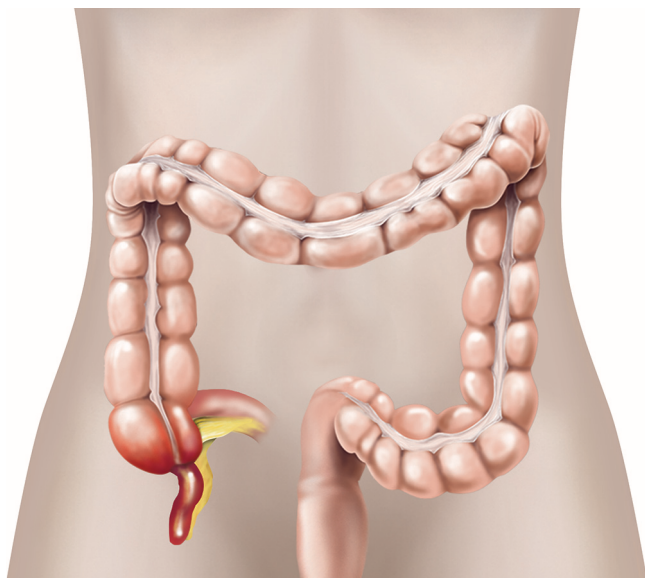


Figure 1
An inflamed appendix

What are the benefits of surgery?

Surgery removes the inflamed appendix and allows infected pus to be washed out. The aim is to prevent the serious complications that appendicitis can cause.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Antibiotics can be used to treat inflammation or an abscess, but only if you are well enough. If an abscess continues or if you become unwell even with antibiotics, you will need an operation.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes one to two hours. Your surgeon will remove your appendix either by using laparoscopic (keyhole) surgery or by an open cut on your abdomen.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding

- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Blood clots
- Unsightly scarring

2 Specific complications

- Damage to structures such as your bowel, bladder or blood vessels
- Developing a hernia
- Surgical emphysema
- Incorrect diagnosis
- Developing an abscess
- Difficulty passing urine
- Continued bowel paralysis
- Developing a leak
- Tissues can join together in an abnormal way
- Pylephlebitis

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home 3 to 5 days after an operation for simple appendicitis or about a week after an operation for a burst appendix. You should be able to return to work after about two to four weeks, depending on how much surgery you need and your type of work.

Summary

Appendicitis is a common condition where your appendix becomes inflamed. Surgery should prevent the serious complications that appendicitis can cause.

Acknowledgements

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