

## What sort of painkillers will I need when I go home?

If you have been admitted for day care surgery then you need to make sure that you have a supply of painkillers ready at home. We suggest ibuprofen (also called nurofen or brufen). It is a very good painkiller and works best if you take it regularly for 2- 3 days after your laparoscopy. If this kind of drug is suitable for you it is very likely you will have been given it immediately after your operation. As you can only have a certain amount in 24 hours the ward nurse will tell you when you can start taking these tablets once you've got home.

Simple painkillers such as paracetamol are also helpful and you can take these at the same time as ibuprofen.

Always read the drug information leaflets before taking any of the above drugs.

## What should I do if I can't take ibuprofen?

Please tell the ward nurse so that we can get another type of painkiller prescribed for you. It is likely that it will be Co-dydramol which contains paracetamol.

## What should I do if I haven't got any painkillers at home?

Please tell the nurse or ward doctor so that we can prescribe some for you. Please note, that as a day patient you may have to pay a prescription charge for these drugs.

The amount of pain each person gets and the number of painkillers each person needs varies a lot, so the above information is only a guide.

## How long will I need painkillers for?

This varies from person to person, but you'll probably find that you need to take them regularly for the first 2 or 3 days. After that, you'll just need them less and less.

## What should I do if my pain doesn't seem to be getting any better?

It's unlikely that this will happen, but if it does or if you have any other worries or concerns about your operation, then you can either

- Contact your Family Doctor  
**or**
- Ring Ward 7, at  
Birmingham Women's Hospital  
Tel: 0121 627 2757

# *Pain Control after Laparoscopy*

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Author: **Pam Snell** - Acute Pain Sister  
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Birmingham Women's   
NHS Foundation Trust

Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TG  
Tel: 0121 472 1377 Fax: 0121 627 2602

## Pain control after laparoscopy

Laparoscopies are done for various reasons. If you're having it done so as to find out the cause of the pain that you already have or to have your Fallopian tubes checked, it's likely that you'll be in and out of hospital on the same day.

However, if you are having it done to treat conditions such as endometriosis you may have to stay in hospital overnight.

Whether you're coming in for the day or staying overnight, most people find that having any operation is a stressful experience and they're often worried about the amount of pain they'll have afterwards.

This leaflet tells you about the sort of pain you might feel after your laparoscopy and the different types of painkillers you can have.

### What sort of pain will I get?

There're 3 different types of discomfort after a laparoscopy.

- Period-like pain, during the 1st 24-48 hours
- Shoulder pain, during the 1st 24-48 hours.
- Abdominal (tummy) discomfort, for anything up to 4 or 5 days.

This doesn't mean to say that you'll get all 3 of them together, but you might get one or two of them at different times!

## Pain control after laparoscopy for pain or to have your tubes checked

### How long will the pain last for?

As you might expect, the pain is usually worst immediately after the operation and then over the next few hours, it begins to feel a bit better.

But what's more surprising, is that the day after your operation, the pain or discomfort may start to get a bit stronger again.

Over the next day or two, your tummy will probably feel quite tender but by the 4th or 5th day, you should be feeling much better.

## Pain control after laparoscopy for surgical treatment

### How long will the pain last for?

The amount of pain or discomfort that you'll get very much depends on the amount of surgery you've had done.

The discomfort will be at its worst during the first 24 hours and then it'll gradually get better. Over the next couple of days, your tummy might be quite tender but by the 4th or 5th day, you should be feeling much better.

### How will my pain be treated?

Again, that depends on how much surgery you've had done, but there are 3 types of painkillers we can give you.

**The first type** is paracetamol. This is suitable for mild pain or discomfort.

**The second type** is an aspirin-type drug called diclofenac (also called Voltarol) which you'll probably be given during the operation. This is suitable for mild to moderate pain and it's better to take it on a regular basis for the first 2 or 3 days after your surgery.

Not everyone can take this type of drug, so if you're one of them and if it suits you, you might have codeine instead.

**The third type** is morphine. This is a strong painkiller and depending on the amount of surgery you've had done, you might need it for the first 24-48 hours.

Some people worry about becoming addicted to morphine. This is very unlikely to happen and you'll find that as the pain and discomfort get better you just won't need it anymore.

### How will the morphine be given?

Again, this depends on the type of operation you've had. If you're staying in overnight, you might have a PCA and oral morphine. If you're just in for the day, you might have an injection or oral morphine.

#### 1. By PCA (Patient-controlled analgesia)

PCA means that you can give yourself some morphine when you need it by pressing a button. The PCA pump is set up so that you can't overdose yourself.

Morphine is quite often given this way and there's a separate leaflet that tells you about PCA in more detail.

#### 2. By injection

We don't give injections of morphine very often because we know that many people don't like them. But they're still a good way of having morphine and occasionally they may be necessary.

We understand that some people hate the idea of an injection, so if you're one of them, please tell the anaesthetist.

#### 3. By mouth

Morphine is sometimes given by mouth. As it takes about 10-20 minutes to work, do ask for it before the pain builds up.

### Are there any side effects to morphine?

- It can often make you feel a bit sleepy so it's quite normal to have extra oxygen if you've got the PCA.
- It can also make you feel a bit sick. If this happens to you, please tell the nurse so that we can treat it.
- It can sometimes make you feel a bit itchy or 'spaced out'.

If you've felt sick or been sick after operations in the past, please tell the anaesthetist, as it may be possible to give you extra drugs to treat this.