

# Laparoscopic transabdominal cerclage



the women's  
the royal women's hospital

Laparoscopic transabdominal cerclage is when we do keyhole surgery to put a stitch around your cervix. You might need this if you have a history of late miscarriage, preterm labour or cervix surgery.

## What is laparoscopic transabdominal cerclage?

Laparoscopic transabdominal cerclage is called laparoscopic TAC. You will have a general anaesthetic and be asleep for the surgery. We put a thin telescope with a camera through your belly button to look inside your body. We put keyhole instruments into your body through four small cuts, less than 1 cm each. We use the keyhole instruments to put a stitch around your cervix.

The stitch keeps your cervix closed to help stop miscarriage or early labour. You would need a caesarean section if you birth a baby. The stitch:

- is permanent
- can stay in for future pregnancies
- does not need to be removed.

Laparoscopic TAC takes about an hour. Most people can go home the same day. We will give you photos from the procedure.

Laparoscopic TAC is easier when you are not pregnant. We can do laparoscopic TAC during the first 10 weeks of pregnancy but it has more risks and a higher chance of failure.

We will talk to you if we need to do other procedures at the same time, for example, to treat endometriosis or remove ovarian cysts.

## When might you need laparoscopic TAC?

You might need laparoscopic TAC if you had:

- miscarriages late in pregnancy
- preterm labour because of cervical shortening
- a different procedure to put a stitch on your cervix, called transvaginal cerclage, that did not work
- surgical procedures on your cervix for dysplasia (precancerous cells)
- your cervix removed because of cancer.

## Before your laparoscopic TAC

We will talk to you about your procedure. You can ask any questions.

You need to fast for at least six hours before your surgery. We will tell you when you need to start fasting.

It doesn't matter if you have your period when you have a laparoscopic TAC.

## After your laparoscopic TAC

The doctor will explain what happened during your procedure. We will explain how to look after yourself and what you need to do. You can ask any questions.

You can go home after you have:

- had something to eat and drink
- emptied your bladder.

You should have someone pick you up after your laparoscopic TAC, in case you have any pain or other symptoms.

You might need 1 to 2 weeks off work to recover. We can give you a certificate.

We will make an appointment for you at our Gynaecology Clinic at the Women's about six weeks after your procedure.

### What symptoms might you have?

Most people have some mild discomfort after a laparoscopic TAC. We give you pain relief medication to take home. You might have some other symptoms, like:

- cramps like period pain
- bleeding
- nausea
- tiredness
- muscle pain
- pain in your shoulder.

If you are worried about your symptoms:

- talk to your local doctor
- go to your nearest Emergency Department.

If it is an emergency, call Triple zero (000).

### After you go home

You can go back to your usual physical activity after about 2 weeks, when:

- any bleeding has stopped
- you feel well enough.

You can go back to your usual sexual activity after 6 weeks. If you want to get pregnant, you should have at least one period before you start trying.

### What are the risks of laparoscopic TAC?

There are some small risks. These are rare. Some people might have:

- bleeding
- an infection
- surgery complications like damage to other organs near your cervix.

We will help you if there are any complications.

There are some risks that the procedure will not work. For example, we might not be able to put the stitch around your cervix or the stitch might not work.

Another rare risk is the need to remove the stitch during pregnancy, for example because of a bleed around the placenta. If the stitch needed to be removed, we would do that through another keyhole procedure.

### What should you do if you get pregnant in the future?

You should see a doctor at a high-risk pregnancy centre or an obstetrician who has experience with laparoscopic TAC.

You might need to have ultrasounds every fortnight until about 28 weeks. Your doctor might recommend progesterone to help your cervix.

### Family Violence Support

#### 1800 Respect National Helpline

1800 737 732

You can call any time of day or night  
1800respect.org.au

### Do you need an interpreter?



Interpreter

If you need an interpreter, you can ask for one.

### For more information

#### Gynaecology Clinics at the Women's

(03) 8345 3033

thewomens.org.au

### Nurse on Call

You can call Nurse on call for general advice and information.

You can call any time of day or night.  
1300 60 60 24

**Disclaimer:** This fact sheet provides general information only. For specific advice about your healthcare needs, you should seek advice from your health professional. The Royal Women's Hospital does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage arising from your reliance on this fact sheet instead of seeing a health professional. If you require urgent medical attention, please contact your nearest emergency department.

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