



Splenectomy

Spleen removal (splenectomy) is surgery to remove a diseased or damaged spleen. This organ is in the upper part of your belly, on the left side underneath the rib cage.

The spleen helps your body fight germs and infections. It also helps filter your blood.

The spleen is removed while you are under general anesthesia (asleep and pain free). Your surgeon may do either an open splenectomy or a laparoscopic splenectomy.

Open spleen removal: Your surgeon will make an incision in the middle of your belly or on the left side of the belly just below your ribs. Your spleen will then be removed. If you are also being treated for cancer, lymph nodes in your belly will be examined and may also be removed. After checking carefully for bleeding in your belly, your surgeon will close your incision.

Laparoscopic spleen removal A laparoscope is an instrument with a tiny camera and a light on the end. It allows your surgeon to see the area through just a small cut. Your surgeon will make three to four small cuts in your belly. The laparoscope will be inserted through one of the cuts, and other medical instruments will be inserted through the other cuts. Gas will be pumped into your belly to expand it. This gives your surgeon more space to work. Your surgeon will use the laparoscope and other instruments to remove your spleen.

Laparoscopic surgery is not for everyone. Ask your doctor if it is right for you.

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