



FAST RECOVERY: Only three days after minimally invasive SILS, Denise McCord was able to return to work. “I had no problems at all, and I was very impressed with the hospital staff,” she says.

Denise McCord was shocked when sudden pain led her to a hospital emergency room, where she was told she needed gallbladder surgery.

“I had no symptoms up until that point,” she says.

McCord’s mother and sister had both undergone gallbladder surgery, and scars and a long recuperation were not something she looked forward to.

“Dr. Tibrewal suggested gallbladder surgery using just one little incision,” she says. “I’m so glad he did.”

From multiple incisions to one

Traditional gallbladder surgery requires a 6-inch incision. Standard laparoscopic gallbladder surgery, though less invasive, still requires four incisions.

“The newest advancement in gallbladder surgery is single-incision laparoscopic surgery (SILS), which replaces four incisions with a single incision in the belly button,” says Anil Tibrewal, MD, an independently practicing surgeon on the medical staff

at Methodist Charlton Medical Center. “The SILS technique is cosmetically preferable, particularly to younger female patients. Of course, the single small incision means less pain for the patient, less chance of injury to other organs, the potential for no visible scar, and a faster recovery. Patients with no complications are often discharged the same day after the laparoscopic procedure.”

When is surgery necessary?

Gallbladder surgery is performed usually to remove gallstones or an infected or inflamed gallbladder. Gallstones can block the flow of bile from the liver and cause the gallbladder to swell. In McCord’s case, there were so many gallstones, “they couldn’t even count them,” she says.

For those who experience the symptoms of sharp pain in the upper-center or upper-right abdomen, low fever, nausea, or feeling bloated, they may have gallbladder disease, and gallbladder removal could relieve the pain, treat infection, and, in most cases, stop

Did you know?

Gallstones are more common in people who:

- ▶ Are Native American
- ▶ Have a family history of gallstones
- ▶ Are overweight
- ▶ Eat a lot of sugar
- ▶ Are pregnant
- ▶ Do not exercise regularly
- ▶ Lose weight rapidly
- ▶ Use estrogen to manage menopause.

Source: American College of Surgeons

gallstones from coming back. Without surgery, there is the possibility of worsening symptoms, infection, or bursting of the gallbladder.



See your doctor if you have any of the above symptoms. If you need a doctor, you can find one at www.MethodistHealthSystem.org/FindAPhysician.

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