Pros and Cons of Keyhole Surgery

BY W Y GIFFORD-JONES, M.D.

What’s the most advanced surgery of recent years? I believe most surgeons would quickly respond “laparoscopic sur-

By now I’m sure the word “keyhole” has been used quite

Many years ago, a distin-

This is a serious

In one study of 6,003 cholecystectomy oper-

Even patients with large bowel mela-

One problem is that

Many years ago, a distin-

While general surgeons often know when to retreat and so do

Keyhole surgery, often referred to as key-

What’s the most advanced sur-

Operations are performed by this method.

Laparoscopic surgery has been a great boon for patients. Without a large incision there is less pain, quicker healing and shorter hospital stay. But as in any type of surgery there are unexpected pitfalls.

Keyhole surgery. But never let the term “keyhole” leave

In 1991 Dr. Joacques Peris-

The laparoscope is typically a one-inch optical instru-

In 1989, when doctors first used

Many years ago, a distin-

Most complications occur 

ting a variety of grasping, cut-

The abdomen is first filled with gas 

Another drawback is that many women with benign fibroid tumors can now circumvent surgery there

To perform laparoscopy the

It’s a rare occurrence.

In one study of 6,003 cholecystectomy oper-

Still both procedures, listen carefully to

Abdominal adhesions can cause extensive adhesions, obscuring vision, and it is more

For instance, the common bile duct that carries bile from the liver to the bowel can be 

A surprising number of surgeons

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Looking at the total picture, laparoscopic procedures beat the old abdominal incisions 

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General gallstones not causing trouble are best left to the cur-

Dr. Gifford-Jones is a medical

news. Since 1989, when doctors first used this procedure the number of cholecystectomies has risen 20

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