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Is laparoscopic appendectomy a safe procedure for pregnant women?

Background:

The incidence of appendicitis in pregnant women is 1/800 to 1/1500. Without proper treatment, the risk of fetal loss is 36 percent higher when appendix is perforated. To perform appendectomy by open or laparoscopic method remains controversy.

Aim:

A retrospective review was performed to study the outcome for both the patients and fetus who had received laparoscopic appendectomy in institution.

Methods:

From January 2013 to December 2018, we had nine pregnant patients diagnosed with appendicitis. Two of them received antibiotic treatment without surgery due to no evidence of appendicitis can be seen by ultrasound, while seven of them were treated with laparoscopic appendectomy. After surgery, patients are routinely admitted to Obstetric ward for monitor signs of preterm labor.

Results:

There was one patient experienced uterine contraction after surgery, which was relieved by tocolytic agent injection. There was no fetal loss, no preterm labor or other pregnancy complication among those patients after surgery.

Discussion:

Concern has been raised that laparoscopic appendectomy may carry higher risk for fetal loss compare to open surgery in pregnant women. However, there are more and more studies suggesting that laparoscopic approach can be safe when patients are under proper monitor after operation. In our experience, we conclude similar result. Therefore, laparoscopic appendectomy in pregnancy can be consider as a safe procedure with meticulous treatment and monitor.