

A woman's guide:

& Adhesions adhesion prevention



Defining Your Quality of Life

Adhesions

What are adhesions?

Adhesions are fibrous bands which connect tissues and organs that are normally separated. Generally, they occur within seven days after surgery as part of the normal healing process.

Why are adhesions a problem?

Since adhesions connect tissues and organs that are normally separated, they can restrict movement and distort internal organs. Adhesions can also cause a variety of complications including infertility, pelvic pain and bowel obstruction. These complications can greatly affect a woman's daily activities.



Where do adhesions form?

There are a number of causes for adhesion formation which include:

SURGICAL TRAUMA

Even minimal trauma, as from the most routine activities of surgery including cutting, coagulation and suturing can directly result in the formation of adhesions.

Foreign materials such as sutures, lint from sponges or powder from surgical gloves can cause an inflammatory response in the body. This inflammatory response can cause adhesions to form.

OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Endometriosis, radiation therapy, pelvic inflammatory disease and infection from a wide number of sources can also cause inflammation and, therefore, promote the formation of adhesions.

BLEEDING

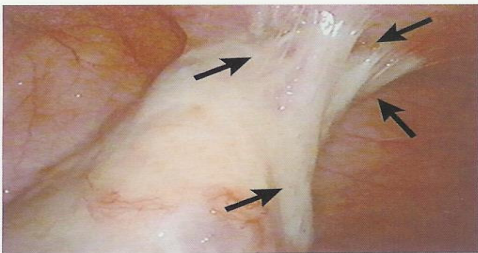
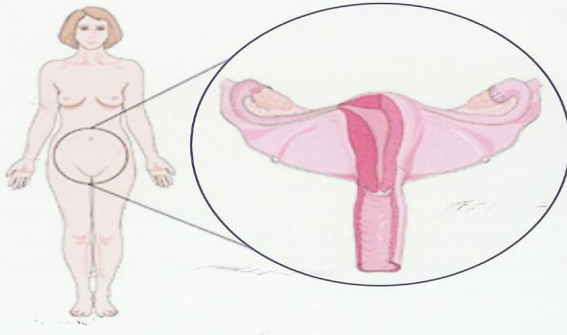
Blood present in the operating field as well as blood from other tissues can cause adhesion formation. In addition, bleeding can occur after surgery is completed, causing the formation of adhesions.

RESTRICTED BLOOD FLOW

Constriction or pinching of blood vessels may prompt the formation of adhesions.

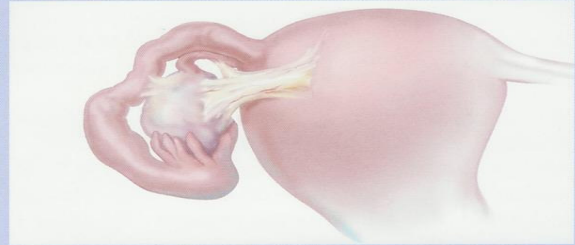
Where do adhesions form?

Adhesions are very common. They can form on virtually any tissue surface following surgery. There are some organs within the body where adhesions are more likely to form. These organs include the ovaries, pelvic sidewalls, fallopian tubes and bowel, which are all potentially affected during various gynecological procedures.



Ovary to Pelvic Side Wall Adhesion

Adhesion Formation



Following uterine surgery, adhesions can form between the uterus and ovaries leading to infertility.



Adhesions can also result in pain and small bowel obstruction, which can be life threatening.

What can be done to prevent adhesions?

It is important for patients to understand that they can neither cause nor eliminate their own adhesions.

Various drugs have been evaluated for the reduction of postoperative adhesions with no study data available to-date documenting any effectiveness. Additionally, surgeons have developed microsurgical techniques that minimize the primary causes of trauma and inflammation with the goal of reducing the formation of adhesions.

The use of new adhesion barrier methods as part of good surgical technique offers great promise for adhesion prevention. Adhesion barriers are applied to the surfaces of tissues during surgery and actively prevent them from coming together during the critical seven-day period following surgery where the healing process occurs and adhesions would form.

How do barriers prevent adhesions?

During an operation, the surgeon would apply the adhesion barrier material onto the surfaces which pose the greatest risk for adhesion formation. The material coats and prevents specific tissues from sticking together and forming adhesions. After the healing process is complete, the material dissolves and is naturally cleared from the body through the urine. (The SprayGel Adhesion Barrier is shown in Figures 1 and 2).

Which adhesion barrier does your surgeon use?

SprayGel™ Adhesion Barrier Application

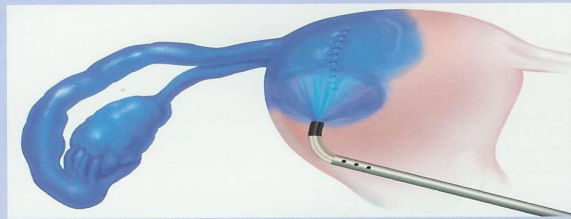


Figure 1: SprayGel Adhesion Barrier is applied to uterus, ovary and fallopian tube during surgery.



Figure 2: Following the healing process, SprayGel Adhesion Barrier is naturally cleared from the body.

For additional information on adhesions and adhesion prevention, speak with your physician or surgeon.