

# After AAA Repair: Treating High Pressure in Your Abdomen



After you have an abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) repair, the pressure inside your belly (abdomen) is at risk for increasing. High pressure in your abdomen lowers the blood flow to your organs. Very high pressure is called abdominal compartment syndrome (ACS). It can harm your organs and they can stop working. ACS is dangerous and may lead to death. If the pressure in your abdomen gets too high, it's treated right away.

## How the pressure in your abdomen is watched

The hospital staff watches the pressure in your abdomen with a small, flexible tube (catheter). This tube is placed in your urethra and up into your bladder. Or, another type of device may be used to measure pressure. You may have straps or sensors on your belly.

## How high pressure can be lowered

To help relieve high pressure in your abdomen:

- You may be put flat on your back. This is because a tilted bed can increase pressure in the abdomen.
- A thin tube may be put into your nose and down into your stomach.
- A thin tube may be put into your anus up into your rectum.

## Surgery to relieve very high pressure

If you have abdominal compartment syndrome (ACS), you will need surgery right away. ACS means the pressure in the abdomen is above a certain level. The healthcare staff will get you ready for surgery. For the surgery:

- You will be given medicine for pain and to help you sleep. The skin of your belly will be cleaned with antiseptic liquid.
- The surgeon will make a cut (incision) in the middle of your abdomen. This will help lower the pressure and increase blood flow to your organs.

## After surgery

The incision may be fully or partly closed. Or it may need to be left open for longer.

If it needs to stay open, you will have a type of temporary closure. This will protect your organs. And it helps prevent pressure building up again. The temporary closure will likely be a sheet of material. This is a special plastic or cloth sheet. It's held in place with clips, staples, stitches (sutures), or in other ways.

The healthcare team will tell you more about this. They will tell you when the incision can be closed fully and how long you may be in the hospital.

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