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**THE EFFECT OF LAPAROSCOPY
ON
IMPLANTATION, DISSEMINATION AND GROWTH
OF
INTRA ABDOMINAL MALIGNANCY**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Title	i
Table of Contents	ii
List of Figures	v
List of Tables	vi
Abstract	vii
Declaration	ix
Acknowledgements	x
Preface	xii
List of Abbreviations	xiii
CHAPTER 1 Introduction	1
1.1. Historical overview	1
1.2. Physiological and immunological effects of laparoscopy	6
1.3. Laparoscopic port site metastases	11
1.4. Wound recurrence following open surgery	14
1.5. Wound metastases following laparoscopic surgery	17
1.6. Laparoscopic environment and wound metastases	20
1.7. Strategies to prevent this phenomenon	24
1.8. Morbidity associated with development of port site recurrences	25
CHAPTER 2 Methods	26
2.1. Background and aims of this project	26
2.2. Animal model and tumour characteristics	27
2.3. Operative techniques	32
2.4. Autopsy examination and histopathology	35
CHAPTER 3 Solid Tumour Model	37
3.1. Comparison of the spread of tumour following laceration of the abdominal wall malignancy during open and laparoscopic surgery	

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER 4 Gas and Gasless Laparoscopy	47
4.1. The difference in spread of abdominal malignancy during laparoscopy, with and without CO ₂ pneumoperitoneum	
CHAPTER 5 Free Tumour Cell Model	54
5.1. Free tumour cell model	54
5.2. The effect of CO ₂ pneumoperitoneum on the implantation and growth of tumour following intraperitoneal injection of free tumour cells	57
CHAPTER 6 Free Tumour Cell and Laparoscopic Gas Leak	67
6.1. The effect of gas leak through an open wound during CO ₂ pneumoperitoneum on the implantation of tumour	
CHAPTER 7 Free Tumour Cell with Gas and Gasless Laparoscopy	76
7.1. Movement of tumour cells following laparoscopy, with and without CO ₂	
CHAPTER 8 Radio-labelled Free Tumour Cells	84
8.1. Radio-labelled cells: a model for studying cell movement	84
8.2. Cell movement in the venting gas model	86
CHAPTER 9 Radio-labelled Free Tumour Cell Dispersion	93
9.1. Pattern of tumour cell dispersion within the peritoneal cavity during CO ₂ insufflation	
CHAPTER 10 Immunological Studies I	107
10.1. Immunological changes caused by open surgery and laparoscopy.	107
10.2. Altered peritoneal macrophage activity : A possible explanation for port site metastases - indirect evidence	109
CHAPTER 11 Immunological Studies II	117
11.1. Peritoneal macrophage activation with laparoscopic, gasless and open surgery	

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER 12 Immunological Studies III	132
12.1. Immune response in the incision wounds following laparotomy and laparoscopic surgery	
CHAPTER 13 Metabolic Effects	142
13.1. Metabolic effects of CO ₂ insufflation on surface pH in the peritoneum of the rat model	
CHAPTER 14	153
14.1. Discussion and conclusions	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	187
APPENDIX	209

ABSTRACT

The work presented in this thesis documents the establishment of a reproducible model of carcinoma implanted into the abdominal wall of an immunocompetent Dark Agouti rat, which has been used to study the relationship between laparoscopy and the development of port site metastases.

At the commencement of this work, the factors leading to the development of port site metastases following laparoscopic surgery of tumours had not been elucidated. The aims were to examine aspects of laparoscopic surgery and their association with the development of port site metastases, as follows:

- surgical technique, environment and instrumentation;
- dissemination, implantation and growth characteristics of tumour cells and
- alterations in the host environment and responses.

The initial work showed an increased incidence of metastases to laparoscopic wounds following laparoscopic laceration of the abdominal wall tumour. The distribution pattern of metastases suggested factors inherent in the laparoscopic environment contributed. The elimination of CO₂ pneumoperitoneum, by gasless laparoscopy, lowered the metastatic incidence to that which occurred by laparotomy. CO₂ may play a crucial role in the development of this phenomena.

An alternative model using free cells injected into the peritoneum demonstrated that CO₂ laparoscopy leads to increased peritoneal distribution and growth of tumour, when compared to gasless laparoscopy or laparotomy. Subsequent studies investigated the capacity of circulating CO₂ to transport cells, by using radio labelled free cells introduced into the peritoneal cavity. These studies revealed viable tumour cells were transported outside the peritoneal cavity by large gas leaks. Laparoscopic procedures increased peritoneal dispersion of cells when compared to laparotomy. The possible immune and metabolic effects of CO₂ on the peritoneal environment are discussed.

Further studies conducted revealed that the tumour bearing state or altered peritoneal environment influenced the tumour spread to wounds and the peritoneum. When macrophage activation following CO₂ pneumoperitoneum was investigated, the preliminary data indicates CO₂ may have a suppressive effect on peritoneal macrophage activation. In a subsequent study immunohistochemistry revealed that macrophage infiltration of laparoscopic wounds was significantly decreased following CO₂ insufflation. Surface pH measurement showed significant acidosis of the peritoneum following CO₂ insufflation. These findings suggest that CO₂ significantly changes the immune and metabolic environment of the wound and peritoneum.

The development of port site metastases appears to be multifactorial and further studies are needed to clarify issues raised in this work. Until the mechanisms of port site metastases are fully understood, this work gives support to the contention that laparoscopic surgery for malignancy should be conducted only within the context of clinical trials.