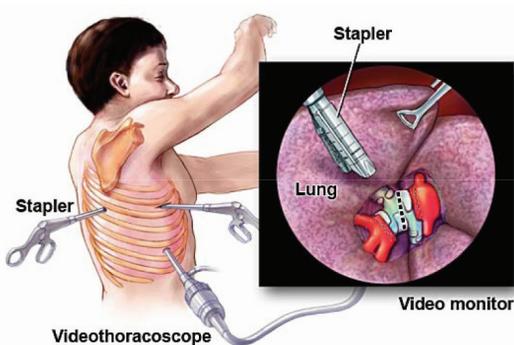


# Video Assisted Thoracoscopy



## What is Video Assisted Thoracoscopy (VAT)

Video Assisted Thoracoscopy (THOR-uh-KOS-koh-pee) is a new method to remove lung cancer tumours. The surgery is also known as VAT.

VAT replaces the standard lung surgery (Thoracotomy) which uses a 6 to 8 inch/12-15 cm incision, cutting chest wall muscles, and spreading the ribs. By using VAT, there is less pain and a quicker recovery.

The surgery is performed using a small video camera that is inserted into the chest with a scope. The video camera lets the surgeon see inside the chest and insert other surgical instruments through other small cuts or "ports".

## What does Video Assisted Thoracoscopy do?

VAT is used to remove pieces of lung, lung nodules and lobes and any suspicious spots on the lungs. These samples are tested for cancer.

## Who will do the Video Assisted Thoracoscopy and where will it be done?

A thoracic surgeon will perform the operation, in an operating room at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. After the surgery, you will stay in hospital for 2 to 3 days.

## How do I prepare for Video Assisted Thoracoscopy?

Your doctor will do a physical exam. Blood tests or other tests will be done before the surgery at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. The night before, eat a light meal and do not eat or drink anything after midnight. Stop smoking for 2 weeks before the surgery.

Have a shower the morning of your surgery. You may be given special soap to use. Do not use deodorant, lotion, perfume or powder on your underarms or chest on the day of your surgery.

Plan to have a ride to and from the hospital. Plan to have help at home after the surgery. If you take blood thinners (such as Coumadin or Warfarin) or regularly take aspirin, ask your doctor if you should stop your medication before the surgery.

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## Is there anything my doctor should know before the surgery?

Tell your doctor about:

- Medications you use, including inhalers and over-the-counter items such as pain medication (i.e. aspirin, Tylenol, Advil), blood thinners, vitamins and herbs.
- Any allergies to latex, tape or any medications.
- Any lung problems you have had.
- If you are pregnant.

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## Will the surgery be painful?

The surgery will be done using general anesthesia. General anesthesia puts you to sleep and you do not feel any pain. You will feel some discomfort in the area of the incisions after the surgery. You may feel tired for a day or so and have general muscle aches.

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## What will happen during the surgery?

You will receive general anesthetic to put you to sleep. During the surgery, one or more cuts will be made in your chest. A tiny camera called a thoracoscope will be put through one incision, and surgical instruments put through the other small incisions.

The camera will send pictures of the inside of your chest to a video monitor. This guides the surgeon in moving the instruments to examine the lungs and remove any tissues. The incisions will be closed with stitches, and covered with a light pressure bandage. You may have a chest drainage tube placed during the surgery.

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## Will I require any special care after the surgery?

When you awake, you will be brought to your room. You will remain in hospital for a few days until your doctor feels you are ready to go home. You will be given instructions to follow after your discharge.

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## When will I know the results of the surgery?

The doctor will discuss the results at your next visit.

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## When to seek IMMEDIATE medical attention:

- Shortness of breath.
- A temperature above 101°F/38.5°C for more than 24 hours.
- Chest pain or severe shortness of breath.
- Chills, shakes, or flu like symptoms.

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## When can I go back to work or continue my normal activities?

Some patients return to work and other normal activities in as little as a week after VAT. Check with your doctor before returning to work or other activities. Talk to your doctor about care of your incision.

*Questions? Call (807) 345-4337*

