# Case Report



# A case report and review of the literature of 7millimeter lateral port-site herniation following total laparoscopic hysterectomy

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Port-site herniation (PSH) is a rare complication observed postlaparoscopic surgery, typically associated with port sizes of 10 mm or larger, commonly occurred at umbilicus. While occurrences of extra-umbilicus with port size smaller than 10 mm are rare, we present a case detailing a lateral 7 mm PSH diagnosed on the 8th day following a total laparoscopic hysterectomy. The patient exhibited clinical symptoms indicative of partial small bowel obstruction, which became apparent on the third postoperative day. Computed tomography revealed significant small bowel dilatation and herniation through the previously employed 7 mm trocar site. Notably, this trocar site had been utilized with uterine screw. Prompt laparoscopic repair successfully addressed the herniation. The patient demonstrated satisfactory recovery and was subsequently discharged. While current practice recommends fascial incision closure for port size  $\geq$ 10 mm. In light of our case, we propose considering fascial closure for small-size trocar subjected to any use of a manipulator.

Key words: 7 mm port size, laparoscopic hysterectomy, port-site herniation, trocar fascia closure, trocar-site herniation, uterine screw

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## Introduction

Port-site herniation (PSH), a recognized but rare complication following laparoscopic procedure. It manifests as a type of incisional hernia, potentially leading to sever morbidity of incarceration and bowel gangrene necessitating prompt surgical intervention. PSH was first reported by gynecologist after a laparoscopic procedure in 1974.<sup>1</sup> Since then, numerous case reports and extensive datasets have provided details the characteristic of PSH in cohorts and clinical trials involving various laparoscopic procedures.<sup>2-4</sup> The reported incidence of PSH varies and this number derives from both symptomatic and asymptomatic cases, ranging from 0.2% to 20%.<sup>2,5-7</sup> However, the true incidence of PSH presenting with incarceration remains elusive and is thought to be low. By extracting insights from data on patients with incisional hernias postopen surgery, we can estimate that the incidence of PSH with incarceration is likely less than 5%.<sup>8,9</sup>

Typically, PSH is more prevalent when utilizing trocars exceeding 10 mm; however, PSH could occur despite with smaller port size.<sup>10,11</sup> Numerous factors contribute to the development of PSH. These including the midline location of the trocar compared to those situated extra-umbilically,<sup>12</sup> the utilization of bladed trocars, the decision to close the fascia, multiple attempts trocar insertions, and the application of vigorous instrument manipulation.<sup>5,6,13,14</sup> In this case report, we present a case of women with PSH after total laparoscopic hysterectomy with bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy (TLH/BSO). This case represents the first occurrence of PSH in over 30 years of experience for our author (CS). This study was reported in accordance with the CARE guidelines.<sup>15</sup>

## **Case presentation**

A 52-year-old, para 2 both by Cesarian delivery, with an unremarkable past medical history underwent a TLH/BSO. We utilized four ports, including a 5 mm intra-umbilical camera port with three 7 mm working ports: one at the left para-umbilical and two in each lower abdominal quadrant. All ports were inserted with closed technique using sharp trocar. The intraoperative findings revealed an enlarged uterus, approximately 16 weeks in size (weighing 851.5 grams) along with severe pelvic adhesions (Figure 1, A). During surgery, uterine manipulation with a uterine screw was utilized via both working ports in the right and left lower quadrants, as the uterus could not be

## FIGURE 1

Intraoperative findings of large uterus with pelvic adhesion



(A)







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effectively mobilized through the transvaginal uterine manipulator (Figure 1, B and C). The specimen was removed via the vaginal route. Sheath and fascia were left unclosed, which is routine practice due to their size being smaller than 10 mm. Our decision is consistent with universal standard practice. Two days after the surgery, she was discharged with an uneventful recovery. There were no signs of gastrointestinal discomfort or abdominal distension before discharge.

On postoperative day 3, she began experiencing gastrointestinal discomfort. The symptoms progressed to nausea and vomiting, prompting her to seek medical attention. She was subsequently admitted to a nearby hospital on postoperative day 6 for supportive management. Upon attending her scheduled follow-up with us on postoperative day 8, she complaining of persistent abdominal pain and nausea with vomiting. Physical examination revealed no signs of fever or tachycardia. Abdominal examination showed hypoactive bowel sounds, soft, markedly distended abdomen, and tenderness upon palpation with an ill-defined mass localized at left lower quadrant. Suspecting intestinal obstruction, she was promptly admitted for an emergency surgical consultation. Computed tomography of the whole abdomen was performed, reveling marked dilatation of the small bowel with a transitional point located on the left side of lower abdomen. Additionally, evidence of small bowel herniation through the lower trocar site was observed, indicative of a laparoscopic port site hernia without evidence of bowel ischemia (Figure 2, A). Emergency surgery was planned.

The surgical procedure was conducted laparoscopically (PT), revealing a left port site hernia with incarceration of the distal jejunum (Figure 3, A, B). The hernia muscle was incised to extend its size, facilitating the reduction of the herniated bowel. Following reduction, no signs of bowel gangrene were observed. The fascia defect in the left lower quadrant was then closed under laparoscopy using Monocryl 1-0 (Figure 3, C, D). The consulting surgeon assessed intraoperatively and decided it was unnecessary to close the previously placed right port. In retrospect, closing it would have been more appropriate to prevent a PSH on that side. The patient recovered successfully and was discharged to return home on postoperative day 8.

## Discussion

In laparoscopic surgery, PSH is recognized as a known but rare complication. We describe a case of PSH occurring in a 7 mm port, adding to the ongoing discussion on the necessity of fascia closure in ports smaller than 10 mm.<sup>14,16</sup> The uncertainty arises from the rarity of PSH in smaller ports without fascia closure, supported by the author's 30 years of experience in laparoscopic gynecological surgery. This case is the first occurrence of PSH in the author's experience. While our surgical practices align with norms that typically do not require fascial closure in ports under 10 mm, this case prompts further exploration of the necessity and implications of such closures in smaller ports.

The presentation of PSH varies, from acute to late manifestations years after surgery.<sup>7,12</sup> A classification system for PSH proposed in 2004, categorizes PSH into three types based on the time of

## FIGURE 2 Computed tomography scan with finding of a left lower PSH



(A) Axial view with evidence of small bowel herniation through the lower trocar site (red arrow). No evidence of bowel ischemia is observed. (B) Coronal view marked dilatation of small bowel with transitional point at left side of mid-abdomen (red arrow). (C) Sagittal view shown the lower trocar site of the previous laparoscopic surgery, consistent with laparoscopic port site hernia (red arrow).

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presentation and the extent of the defect in the abdominal layers: (1) Early onset, (2) late-onset, and (3) special type.<sup>12</sup> The early onset type involves dehiscence of the anterior fascial plane, posterior fascial plane, and peritoneum. This type typically develops shortly after surgery, presenting as a small bowel obstruction as observed in our case. The true incidence of PSH, all forms combined, is

FIGURE 3

likely higher than the under-reported in existing literature, attributed to patients either not reporting symptoms or being lost to follow-up.<sup>3</sup> Late-onset PSH is often asymptomatic, with recent report indicating an incidence as high as 23.7%, assessed through physical examination on incision sites or imaging.<sup>7</sup> However, lateonset PSH appears to be less concerning due to the rare occurrence of bowel incarceration, unlike the early onset type.<sup>11,12</sup> The current guideline from the 2023 European Hernia Society suggested that surgical intervention for midline PSH should be considered optional and dependent on the choices made by both the physician and the patient.<sup>16</sup>

The first case report of PSH causing small bowel obstruction in a port size smaller than 10 mm was documented by Plaus in 1993,<sup>17</sup> marking the initial report of two cases with 5 mm herniation PSH. Since then, numerous reports have been published, even in port sizes as small as 3 mm.<sup>10</sup> However, a surveybased study with a sample size more than 4 million cases reported a significantly lower incidence of 0.02%. Interestingly, over 80% of the reported PSH cases, with an incidence of 0.02% were associated with port sizes larger than 10 mm.<sup>18</sup> This suggests that the incidence of PSH in port sizes smaller than 10 mm is presumably very low. As the pathogenesis of PSH in small trocar ports remains unclear, there is still a critical need to identify the factors associated with PSH in port sizes smaller than 10 mm. Particularly, limited evidence is available, constrained to only case series or nonrandomized data, to guide proper recommendations for standard practice in PSH prevention for small trocar sizes (Table).

Various factors associated with PSH have been reported, including obesity,

# Intraoperative finding during Laparoscopic repair of incarcerated PSH



Parts (A and B) shown a PSH with incarceration of the mid-small bowel (distal jejunum), leading to the dilatation of the proximal small bowel. (C) Following the reduction of the small bowel, there was no evidence of gangrenous bowel. (D) The fascia defect was closed using Monocryl 1-0 through an intracorporeal technique.

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Author	Procedure	Type of study	Number of patients	Type of trocar	Trocar's size	Site of trocar	Presentation	Fascia closure of incident port	Denote
Plaus <sup>17</sup>	Laparoscopic cholecystectomy	Case report	5	NA	10 mm (4), 5 mm (2)	Subxiphoid (2), midline (3)	Tender, pro- truding mass (omentum)	Not closed	One case involved concurrent port site herniations at both the infraumbilical and supra- pubic (12 and 5 mm)
Nezhat <sup>22</sup>	Gynecologic	Retrospective case review ( <i>n</i> =5300)	10	NA	10 mm (6), 5 mm (5)	Umbilical (5), Midline suprapubic (1), lateral (5)	Small bowel obstruction, Protruding mass (omentum)	Not closed	One case involved concurrent port site herniations at both the umbilical and left lateral ports (10 and 5 mm), resulting in bowel ischemia and neces- sitating laparoscopic segmen- tal small bowel and large bowel resection
Reardon <sup>23</sup>	Laparoscopic parae- sophageal hernia repair	Case report	1	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Postoperative small bowel obstruction was observed on d 2 and managed conserva- tively, followed by surgical exploration on d 25. Laparot- omy revealed no bowel ischemia
Eltabbakh <sup>24</sup>	Laparoscopic- assisted vaginal hysterectomy, bilat- eral salpingo- oophorectomy, lymphadenectomy	Case report	1	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 1-wk postsurgery. Laparotomy revealed no bowel ischemia
Bergemann <sup>10</sup>	Laparoscopic tubal ligation	Case report	1	NA	3 mm	Umbilical	Tender, pro- truding mass (omentum), no abdomi- nal symptoms	Not closed	Presented on postoperative d 2
Sirito <sup>25</sup>	Laparoscopic ovarian cystectomy	Case report	1	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Tumefactive mass	Not closed	Presented 1 y postsurgery with a mass on the lateral port site (endometriotic tissue)
Yee <sup>26</sup>	Diagnostic laparoscopy	Case report	1	Blunt	3 mm	Umbilical	Protruding mass, no	Not closed	Pediatric case (18 mo old). Detected on d 5 postsurgery

TABLE

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 TABLE

 Summary of PSH associated with trocar size smaller than 10 mmPlease check the author name (Kanis 2013) cited here as they do not belong to Ref. [32].

(continued)

Author	Procedure	Type of study	Number of patients	Type of trocar	Trocar's size	Site of trocar	Presentation	Fascia closure of incident port	Denote
							abdominal symptoms		
Seamon <sup>27</sup>	Robotic hysterec- tomy, bilateral sal- pingo-oophorec- tomy, and pelvic and aortic lymphadenectomy	Case report	1	da Vinci S bladeless obturator (Blunt)	8 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented on postoperative d 4
Moreaux <sup>28</sup>	Laparoscopic hyster- ectomy, bilateral salpingo-oophorec- tomy, and pelvic lymphadenectomy	Case report	2	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 6 d postsurgery, 2 d after drains were removed. Strangulated ischemic bowel required small bowel resection (Case 1). Drains were placed in 5 mm ports in both cases
Spaliviero <sup>29</sup>	Robot-assisted lapa- roscopic prostatectomy	Case report	1	Blunt	8 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 13 d postsurgery. Preperitoneal herniation of small bowel
Huang <sup>30</sup>	Laparoscopic bilateral salpingo-oophorec- tomy and right par- acaval lymph node biopsy	Case report	1	Blunt	5 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 24 h postsurgery. Strangulated ischemic bowel required small bowel resection
Dulskas <sup>31</sup>	Laparoscopic cholecystectomy	Case report	1	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 1 y postsurgery. Drainage previously placed in this lateral 5 mm trocar port site
Yamamoto <sup>11</sup>	Laparoscopic hysterectomy	Case report	1	Blunt	5 mm	Lateral	Partial bowel obstruction (Spigelian hernia)	Not closed	Presented on postoperative d 4. Extensive trocar manipulation
Khurshid <sup>32</sup>	Laparoscopic tubal ligation	Case report	1	Blunt	5 mm	Lateral	-	Not closed	Large bowel herniation observed immediately after lateral port removal. The trocar was rein- troduced to reduce the herni- ated large bowel
Kanis (2013) <sup>33</sup>	Gynecologic oncology	Case report	2	Blunt	5 mm	Lateral	Abdominal distention	Not closed	-
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(continued)

Author	Procedure	Type of study	Number of patients	Type of trocar	Trocar's size	Site of trocar	Presentation	Fascia closure of incident port	Denote
							and tender with pro- truding mass	·	
Lim <sup>34</sup>	Robot-assisted lapa- roscopic prostatectomy	Case report	1	Blunt	8 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 3-d postsurgery. Pre- peritoneal herniation of small bowel
Tsu <sup>35</sup>	Robot-assisted lapa- roscopic prostatectomy	Case report	1	NA	8 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	-
Kilic <sup>36</sup>	Robotic hysterectomy	Case report	1	NA	8 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 3-d postsurgery
Pellegrino <sup>37</sup>	Laparoscopic total hysterectomy with bilateral annessiectomy	Case report	1	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 10-d postsurgery
Paul <sup>38</sup>	Laparoscopic myomectomy	Case report	1	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 3-d postsurgery. Uter- ine screw was used
Chorti <sup>39</sup>	Laparoscopic cholecystectomy	Case report	1	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Drains were placed in herniated 5 mm ports
Cho <sup>40</sup>	Robotic cholecystectomy	Case report	1	Blunt	8 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction. Palpable mass at port site	Not closed	Diagnostic laparoscopy after 5 d of failed conservative manage- ment revealed nonviable small bowel. A conversion to minila- parotomy was performed for segmental small bowel resection
Zhao <sup>41</sup>	Laparoscopic staging surgery	Case report	1	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Partial small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented 8-d postsurgery
Damani <sup>42</sup>	General surgery, urol- ogy, and gynecology	Retrospective case review ( <i>n</i> =11,566)	15 (0.13%)	Blunt	8 mm (11), 12 mm (4)	Lateral (10), Midline (5)	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Reoperation at median 4.0 d postsurgery (IQR 3.0–7.0 d). 2 cases (18%) required small bowel resection. 7 PSH at 8 mm were not associated with surgical drain
Srisombut. A case	e report and review of the litera	ture of 7-millimeter la	ateral port-site hern	iation following tot	al laparoscopic hysterect	omy. Am J Obstet Gy	necol Glob Rep 2024.		(continued)

 

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(continued)

Author	Procedure	Type of study	Number of patients	Type of trocar	Trocar's size	Site of trocar	Presentation	Fascia closure of incident port	Denote
Su <sup>43</sup>	Laparoscopic rectal resection	Case report	1	NA	5 mm	Lateral	Tender, pro- truding mass	Not closed	Drain associated PSH
Marton <sup>44</sup>	Laparoscopic hysterectomy	Case report	1	Blunt	5 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented on postoperative d 2. Required converted minilapar- otomy for segmental small bowel resection
Cianfarani <sup>45</sup>	Robot—assisted abdominal wall surgery	Prospective case series ( <i>n</i> =166, 513 trocars)	1	NA	8 mm	Umbilical	Asymptomatic	Not closed	Median follow-up time was 14.5 mo (range: 9.0–23.2). All cases underwent ultrasound to detect subclinical PSH
Hong <sup>46</sup>	Robotic myomectomy	Case report	2	NA	8 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	On postoperative d 1, a hernia developed at the port site where a Jackson-Pratt drain remains in place (case 1). A similar case presented on postoperative d 3 with obstructive symptoms at the left port.
Seike <sup>47</sup>	Robot-assisted left nephrectomy, Robot-assisted dis- tal gastrectomy	Case report	2	NA	8 mm	Lateral	Small bowel obstruction	Not closed	Presented on postoperative d 6 and d 8
Milone <sup>48</sup>	General surgery, urology	Retrospective case review (n=320)	1 (0.31%)	Blunt	8 mm	Lateral	Asymptomatic	Not closed	Mean follow-up time was 29.1 mo (SD 13.42)

age above 60 years, diabetes, prolonged surgical duration, manipulation force via trocar, the necessity for fascia enlargement during specimen extraction, and single-port incision laparoscopy (SILS).<sup>3–5</sup> Notably, SILS has been identified as an important risk factor for PSH, demonstrating an odds ratio of 1.92 compared to conventional laparoscopic surgery.<sup>19</sup> Anatomically, the linea alba is recognized as possibly the most vulnerable and least vascularized part of the abdominal wall, contributing to a higher incidence of PSH at the midline compared to lateral PSH.<sup>16,20</sup> However, since we only utilized the midline port as a camera port, port manipulation is minimal and not sufficient to create PSH. In our case, we applied extensive leverage force by utilizing a left lower 7 mm trocar port to mobilize the large uterus, which was adhered to the pelvic cavity due to severe adhesions. This factor, involving the use of force to overcome resistance and stiffness, led to the widening of the fascia defect, which is considered the most likely cause of PSH. Although the right port site also experienced leverage force from the uterine screw, albeit to a lesser degree that the left side, it was not closed during the surgical repair. This potentially led to the development of a PSH. The mean time for early onset PSH, presenting as small bowel obstruction is 5 days (range 2-12 days).<sup>12</sup> This suggests that if our patient were to develop a PSH at the right port site, it would likely not present as a life-threatening small bowel obstruction but rather as a late-onset PSH with symptoms of bulging and mass, which is often subclinical.<sup>21</sup> Despite applying pressure to the uterine surface without penetrating the screw tip into the fundus, resulting in increased manipulation force on the trocar, we still prefer and routinely use this technique. In our experience, using this nondrilled technique helps avoid bleeding at the penetration site on the fundus, offers more flexibility in movement, and allows convenience of changing the screw from one trocar to the other. To perform the upward manipulation, we apply firm force against the lateral surface of the uterus to create friction and pull the screw upward.

Despite following our standard practices to prevent port site-related complications, such as observing trocar removal under laparoscopic vision and shaken the abdominal wall after CO<sub>2</sub> was completely evacuated to ensured that no part of the bowel would become trapped at the trocar site, and early ambulation, a PSH still occurred in our cases. This case report contributes valuable insights into the existing literature on the recommended closure of the fascia in 5 mm port site in cases involving extensive manipulation.<sup>11</sup> The application of multiple directional manipulation forces via the trocar can lead to the widening of the fascia defect, as observed in our case. To prevent such complications, we recommend closing the fascia for any trocar size that involves the application of extensive force.

## Conclusion

It is strongly recommended to close the fascia in any port when significant force is applied to the trocar. Exclusive minimally invasive approach for hernia repair is essential to minimize patient dissatisfaction when complications occur.

# CRediT authorship contribution statement

Chartchai Srisombut: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Validation, Supervision, Resources, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Data curation, Conceptualization. Nahathai Paktinun: Data curation. Poochong Timratana: Data curation.

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