The nylon-tape retraction technique for laparoscopic appendicectomy

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The laparoscopic approach is increasingly used for appendicectomy. A common technique is to place two instrument ports and use one for retraction and the other for dissection. During difficult cases, a third port and instruments for retraction are often valuable. We describe a technique that enables retraction of the appendix without insertion of additional ports.

TECHNIQUE
A 20-cm length of nylon tape is fashioned to have a loop at one end and a length of suture (eg Vicryl; Ethicon, Somerville, New Jersey, USA) at the other (Figure 1). This is inserted easily through a 5mm port. The tail of the nylon tape is passed through a window created in the mesoappendix (Figure 2) and directed through the loop at the other end (Figure 3) securing it around the appendix (Figure 4).

A fascial closure device (Karl Storz, Tuttlingen, Germany; Figure 1) is inserted through a stab incision in the right iliac fossa and used to exteriorize the suture and tail of the nylon tape. This retracts the appendix to the abdominal wall. An artery forceps placed on the suture can hold the tape secure and maintain stable retraction.

DISCUSSION
This simple technique avoids the placement of additional ports and does not require an assistant to maintain appendicular retraction. The nylon tape reduces damage to a fragile and inflamed appendix, which can occur with laparoscopic graspers.

Figure 1

Figure 3

Figure 2

Figure 4