

Consultant has his finger on the button!

A PIONEERING consultant surgeon at Rochdale Infirmary has successfully carried out two gallbladder operations through patients' belly buttons.

The gallbladder is a small sac that lies under the liver and stores bile to help with the digestion of fat. Gallstones normally occur when the bile inside forms stones.

The new technique of single incision surgery is a revelation compared with the previous operation that required four cuts at various points on the abdomen using keyhole surgery.

Mr Siba Senapati, consultant surgeon at the Trust, is understood to be the first in the North West to have successfully carried out this operation.

He said: "One in five people will develop gallstones in their lifetime, these tend to be women, people over 40-years-old and people who are overweight.

"The gallstones are fatty lumps of material that solidify and harden, eventually causing the gall bladder to become diseased.

"Once stones start to form, they line the gallbladder with disease, and once it is diseased, it will cause more and more stones to form.

"Gall stones are quite common and have the potential to cause significant illnesses like recurrent pain, jaundice, pancreatitis, and even mortality."

Mr Senapati recently studied the technique in Arizona, USA, where the world's leading keyhole surgeons gathered to share their expertise.

He said: "This new technique is practised in a few well established keyhole surgery centres in the world, but only in a handful of centres in the UK.

"The two patients that have been treated were very happy and were discharged within 24 hours.

"Not only is this technique less painful, it also means we don't have to do four different cuts which is the normal technique in keyhole surgery, which is excellent for the patient.

"There is less scarring for the patient and this reduces the anxiety and stress that can occur when a patient is left with considerable scars.

"I firmly believe that there is a good chance that a large number of patients will be able to benefit from this treatment."