

FIGO Minimally Access Surgery (MAS) Committee

COVID – 19 crisis and elective benign gynecological surgery

The current crisis associated with the COVID - 19 pandemic is exerting great pressure on all health systems, but especially on LMICs. Elective surgery consumes resources from these health systems and expends important resources that could be needed in the treatment of COVID 19 patients requiring high complexity medical support.

All the communities in the world must prepare to use their available resources in the best way, seeking to reduce the impact and morbidity and mortality of patients infected with COVID-19.

So, and in order to optimize resources and balance individual needs and those of the general population, FIGO and its Minimally Access Surgery (MAS) committee recommend:

- 1) **Suspending elective and non-urgent surgical procedures** based on the health resources of each country and on the response capacity of each health system in particular. The scheduling of benign gynecological elective surgery should be based on the individual conditions of both the patients and the available local and regional resources.
- 2) **Patients who may suffer damage or health consequences due to postponing their surgical procedures must be individually evaluated** and undergo surgery according to strict improved protocols for recovery after surgery and, as far as possible, ensuring short hospital stay or outpatient procedures.
- 3) Urgent surgical procedures, both obstetrical and benign gynecological, **should not be postponed** to avoid negative effects on the health of patients who require them.
- 4) All the members of the health systems must be aware about current biosafety protocols to **assure both patients and personal safety**.

The rapid evolution of the situation forces us to periodically review the measures taken and analyze the clinical, social and economic context derived from each decision taken.

About FIGO

FIGO is a professional organization that brings together obstetrical and gynecological associations from all over the world.

FIGO's vision is that women of the world achieve the highest possible standards of physical, mental, reproductive and sexual health and wellbeing throughout their lives. We lead on global Programme activities, with a particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia.

FIGO advocates on a global stage, especially in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) pertaining to reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and non-communicable diseases (SDG3). We also work to raise the status of women and enable their active participation to achieve their reproductive and sexual rights, including addressing FGM and gender-based violence (SDG5).