**Principles of Laparotomy**

Laparotomy is commonly performed either for exploratory purposes when a clinical diagnosis is still uncertain or for specific purpose when a clinical diagnosis has already been made. Flank laparotomy through the left paralumbar fossa is commonly used for exploratory laparotomy if a problem is suspected on the left side and the procedure is specifically indicated for left-sided abomasopexy, rumenotomy and caesarean section.

The right paralumbar approach is used for exploratory laparotomy if a problem is suspected on the right side, and it is specifically indicated for surgical conditions of the abomasum, including right-sided omentopexy or abomasopexy, small intestine, cecum and colon. The right paralumbar approach will provide best access to the abdomen and the most complete exploratory in the adult ruminant.

Other approaches include, ventral paramedian laparotomy, and less commonly, ventral oblique incision.