

Hernia Repair

... after the procedure

About My Procedure

A hernia occurs when an organ or fatty tissue squeezes through a weak spot in a surrounding muscle or connective tissue called fascia.

There are different types of operations that are used for hernia repair. The type of repair you need will depend on the size and location of the hernia, as well as other factors that are specific to your health and size.

- ⇒ One type is called open surgery. For this surgery, the doctor opens the area on the skin around the hernia to repair it.
- ⇒ The other type of hernia repair is called laparoscopic surgery or robotic assisted surgery. For this type of surgery, small incisions are made near the herniated tissue. Then, a tiny scope with a small camera attached is inserted into your body through one of the small incisions. This allows the doctor to see the hernia. Instruments are then inserted through the other incisions, and the doctor completes the rest of the hernia repair in a similar fashion to the open surgical technique.

These surgeries may or may not include the use of a mesh to help hold the repair in place. Your doctor will decide if a mesh best meets your specific needs.

Medications

- A prescription for pain medication will be given to you upon dismissal. Please use the medication as needed, and as prescribed.

Follow-up Appointment

- You will need to see your doctor in the office 7-10 days after surgery. You are responsible for making your own appointment.

Your Recovery

- If you do not have complications, you usually will go home the same day after your procedure.
- You may feel tired following the procedure. Plan on going home to rest after your procedure to recuperate and heal in your recliner or bed.

Nutrition

- When you wake up from anesthesia, you will be able to drink small amounts of liquid. If you do not feel sick, you can begin eating within a few hours after surgery. Start your diet with liquids working your way back to a normal diet as tolerated.
- If you do not experience any nausea or vomiting you can usually return to a normal diet within a few days.
- Anesthesia, decreased activity and pain medications can contribute to constipation. Avoid straining with bowel movements by increasing the fiber in your diet and/or use of over-the-counter stool softeners. Be sure you are drinking 8-10 glasses of fluid each day unless you are on a fluid restriction.



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Activity

- Slowly increase your activity. Be sure to get up and walk every hour or so during the daytime to prevent blood clot formation.
- You may usually return to work 1 week after laparoscopic surgery as long as you don't do any heavy lifting. Your doctor will inform you of any longer restrictions should they apply.
- Do not lift items heavier than 15 pounds or participate in strenuous activity for at least 6 weeks.
- No driving for 48 hours.
- Take it easy while you recover. Pain is your body's way of telling you to rest an injured area. If you are experiencing pain with certain activity limit or stop that activity until your body heals.

Wound Care

- Apply ice to your incision for the first 24hrs. (20-30 minutes at a time)
- Always wash your hands before and after touching near your incision site.
- Clean your incisions daily using antibacterial soap and water.
- You may take a shower and rinse off the incision, starting tomorrow.
- Do not soak in a bathtub or pool until your incisions are completely healed.
- If you have a dressing, you may remove it 24 hours after surgery.
- If you have a glue-like covering over the incision, just allow the glue to flake off on its own. Do not pick at the glue.
- If you have steri-strips in place, they will generally fall off in 7-10 days or your doctor may remove them at your follow-up visit.
- A small amount of drainage from the incision site can be normal. To protect your clothing, you can cover the site with gauze dressing if needed. This should resolve in 2-3 days.
- It's not unusual for patients to experience swelling and bruising at the hernia repair site. Sometimes the bruising and swelling may extend on to the penis or into the scrotum of male patients. This will resolve over the next few days.
- Despite the greatest care, any incision can become infected. Contact your physician immediately if you run a fever, if your incision becomes more painful rather than less painful as days go by, becomes swollen, reddened, shows pus or red streaks.

WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR

Call your doctor immediately if you have any of the following:

- Fever above 101.5°F or 38.5°C
- Signs of an infection as described above
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or constipation that persists
- Swelling, redness or pain in your leg
- Difficulty urinating
- The dressing is soaked with blood or there are other signs of bleeding
- A dramatic increase in pain