



**Mersey and West Lancashire  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Trust**

## **PATIENT INFORMATION**

# **Hernia Repair**



## **WHAT IS A HERNIA?**

A hernia occurs when the intestine protrudes through a weak area or tear in the muscle that lines the abdominal wall. This protrusion causes a bulge under the skin. Most hernias occur in the groin but can be seen elsewhere such as around the navel.

An incisional hernia occurs around a previous operation scar.

## **SYMPTOMS & REASONS FOR SURGERY**

- A lump appears on walking or exercise
- Pain in the area - this may improve when lying down
- The lump may go back into the abdomen - this is called a reducible hernia
- On rare occasions the blood supply in that area may become restricted

## **WHAT DOES THE OPERATION INVOLVE?**

- You will be admitted on the day of your operation.
- You will be asked to have nothing to eat or drink for 6 hours before the operation.
- You will be asked to wear stockings to reduce the risk of a blood clot.

- You may be given an injection to thin the blood (Heparin).
- You will be given either a general, local or spinal anaesthetic.
- You may be given an injection of antibiotics.

**IF YOU ARE ALLERGIC TO PENICILLIN OR ANY OTHER ANTIBIOTICS PLEASE INFORM THE HOSPITAL STAFF BEFORE YOUR SURGERY**

- A cut is made over the hernia.
- The hernia is pushed back inside.
- The weakness in the abdominal wall is repaired.
- Sometimes a nylon mesh is used internally to strengthen the repair.
- The skin is stitched, usually with dissolving sutures, and covered with a dressing.

**WHAT ABOUT AFTER THE OPERATION?**

**POST OPERATION**

- Once you are reasonably mobile around the ward, you will be allowed home but you may have to stay in hospital overnight.
- Pain killers such as Paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen are usually sufficient for any pain after going home.

- You will need a responsible adult to accompany you home.

## **WOUND**

- The dressing may be removed after 5-7 days.
- The wound may be red and bruised around the scar. This is quite normal and should improve each day with healing taking up to 3 weeks.
- After 7 days you may wash the wound with mild unscented soap as required.
- A firm scar should form and as it heals it will gradually recede.

## **ADVICE FOLLOWING A GENERAL ANAESTHETIC**

Following a general anaesthetic there are certain precautions you must take for the 24 hour period after your operation/procedure.

- You must have a responsible adult to take you home and stay with you overnight.
- You must not drive. Your insurance may not cover you if you have an accident.
- You should not enter into any legally-binding commitments.
- You must not operate machinery, including household appliances.
- You must not drink alcohol.
- You should not be wholly responsible for young children

or dependents.

- You should not return to any kind of work.

## **GENERAL RECOVERY**

- A gradual increase in activity is recommended, walking or keeping generally active. Swimming is possible after a couple of weeks.
- The majority of patients are back to normal activity after about 4 weeks.
- You may drive when you can safely perform an emergency stop and turn around to reverse safely.
- Avoid heavy lifting for at least 6 weeks.
- Do not strain when opening your bowels and try to avoid becoming constipated.
- Sexual activity can be resumed once the wound is comfortable.
- In most cases you will not need to be seen in clinic again; however you should not be concerned if you are asked to return.

## **ARE THERE ANY POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS / RISKS WITH THIS?**

Any operation may incur complications, including:

- A recurrence of the problem

- Surgical wound infection
- Deep Vain Thrombosis (DVT)
- Excessive bleeding or discharge from the wound
- An increase in the pain/redness or swelling around the wound area
- Men may experience swollen and bruising to testicles – close fitting underpants may help to support and reduce swelling.
- Raised temperature or feeling unwell
- You may become constipated. High fibre diet and oral fluids recommended.

### **Contact your GP or GP Out of Hours service if:-**

- You have severe pain
- Your operation sites become increasingly swollen, red, hot and/or produces a discharge
- Bruising severely worsens

The likelihood of complications increases in the following:

- Adults over 70
- The obese / Smokers / heavy drinkers
- Diabetics

- People taking certain types of medication, Please discuss your medication with the doctor before surgery.

## THE BENEFITS OF THE OPERATION

Stops the possibility of strangulation of the bowel.

Enables the patient to become pain free.

The operation has a success rate of approx 90-95%.

However, if your operation is being done for the second time, then the success rate is approx 75%.

About 5% of patients develop a wound infection which will require a course of antibiotics.

You should ensure that you understand what is written above, before you sign your consent form.

If you have any uncertainty then please, discuss this with the doctor before you sign the form.

This patient information leaflet is intended to be used to support discussion during your clinical consultation. If there is anything you do not understand or are unsure about, please ask the doctor at your appointment or contact the people below:

Ormskirk Treatment Centre (01695) 656468  
Mon – Fri  
0800 – 1700 hrs

G Ward (01695) 656903

# NOTES

**During your time in hospital, it is important to us that you are happy with your care and treatment. Please speak to a member of staff and/or the ward Sister/Charge Nurse if you have any questions or concerns.**

## **MATRON**

A Matron is also available during the hours of 9am – 5 pm Monday to Friday. During these periods, ward staff can contact Matron to arrange to meet with you. Out of hours, a Senior Nurse can be contacted via the ward to deal with any concerns you may have.

## **INFECTION CONTROL REQUEST**

Preventing infections is a crucial part of our patients' care. To ensure that our standards remain high our staff have regular infection prevention and control training and their practice is monitored in the workplace. We ask patients and visitors to assist us in preventing infections by cleaning their hands at regular intervals and informing staff of areas within the hospital that appear soiled.

As a patient there may be times that you are unsure whether a staff member has cleaned their hands; if in doubt please ask the staff member and they will be only too happy to put your mind at ease by cleaning their hands so that you can see them.

## **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR AFTER YOU HAVE LEFT HOSPITAL**

Advised to rest but keep mobile to reduce likelihood of Deep Vein Thrombosis.

## **ANY CONDITION SPECIFIC DANGER SIGNALS TO LOOK OUT FOR:**

- Severe pain and/or bruising and/or excessive bleeding from wound.
- Site of operation becomes increasingly swollen, red and/or produces a discharge.
- Raised temperature.
- Painful and/or swollen calf.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR CONDITION AFTER YOU HAVE LEFT HOSPITAL**

Nursing staff on the Treatment Centre  
Mon – Fri 0800 – 1700 hrs  
(01695) 656468

Nursing staff on G Ward  
(01695) 656903

Nursing staff on Ward 10B  
(01704) 704502

## **OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS/CONTACTS:**

NHS 111  
Stop Smoking Helpline (Sefton) - 0300 100 1000  
Stop Smoking Helpline (West Lancashire) - 0800 328 6297

**Please call 01704 704714 if you need  
this leaflet in an alternative format**

**Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust**

Ormskirk & District General Hospital  
Wigan Road, Ormskirk, L39 2AZ  
Tel: (01695) 577111

Southport & Formby District General Hospital  
Town Lane, Kew, Southport, PR8 6PN  
Tel: (01704) 547471

**FOR APPOINTMENTS**

Telephone (01695) 656680  
Email [soh-tr.appointments@nhs.net](mailto:soh-tr.appointments@nhs.net)

We would welcome your feedback about your experience  
at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust.  
Please access the Friends and Family Test at the following  
link:  
<https://www.southportandormskirk.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/fft/>  
**Thank you**

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