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GS12lite Laparoscopic Inguinal Hernia Repair (TAPP)

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This document will give you information about a laparoscopic inguinal hernia repair (TAPP - transabdominal preperitoneal). If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is an inguinal hernia?

Weak spots can develop in the layer of muscle in the abdominal wall, resulting in the contents of the abdomen pushing through. This produces a lump called a hernia (see figure 1).

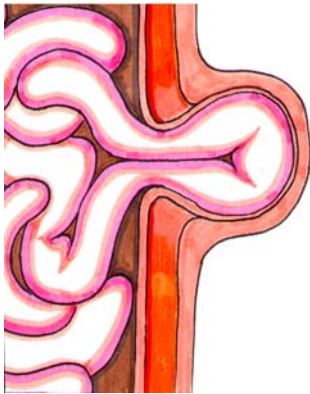


Figure 1

Hernia – bowel pushing through a weakness in the muscle wall of the abdomen

An inguinal hernia happens at the inguinal canal. This is a narrow passage in which blood vessels supplying the testicle pass through the abdominal wall.

A hernia can be dangerous because the intestines or other structures within the abdomen can get trapped and have their blood supply cut off (strangulated hernia).

What are the benefits of surgery?

You should no longer have the hernia. Surgery should prevent you from having any serious complications that a hernia can cause.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

You can sometimes control the hernia with a truss (padded support belt) or simply leave it alone. It will not go away without an operation.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes about half an hour (less than an hour for a repair to both sides).

Your surgeon will make several small cuts on your abdomen. They will place surgical instruments, along with a telescope, inside your abdomen and perform the operation.

Your surgeon will return the part of the abdomen showing out and causing the hernia, and insert a synthetic mesh to cover the weak spot.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Unsightly scarring
- Blood clots

2 Specific complications

- Damage to internal organs
- Developing a hernia near one of the cuts
- Injury to the bowel
- Surgical emphysema
- Developing a lump at the site of the original hernia
- Discomfort or pain in the groin
- In men, discomfort or pain in the testicle on the side of the operation
- In men, difficulty passing urine
- In men, damage to the blood supply of the testicle

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day or the day after.

You may return to normal activities when you feel comfortable to do so, usually after one week. You do not need to avoid lifting, but you may find it uncomfortable if you lift heavy weights within the first two to four weeks.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, you should ask a member of the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Occasionally the hernia comes back.

Summary

An inguinal hernia is a common condition caused by a weakness in the abdominal wall, near the inguinal canal. If left untreated, an inguinal hernia can occasionally cause serious complications.

Acknowledgements

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This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.