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Paraumbilical and Umbilical Hernia Repair

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This document will give you information about a paraumbilical and umbilical hernia repair. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What are paraumbilical and umbilical hernias?

There is a natural weakness in the wall of your abdomen at your umbilicus (belly button). This is caused by the way babies develop in the womb. If the contents of your abdomen push through, this produces a lump called a hernia (see figure 1).

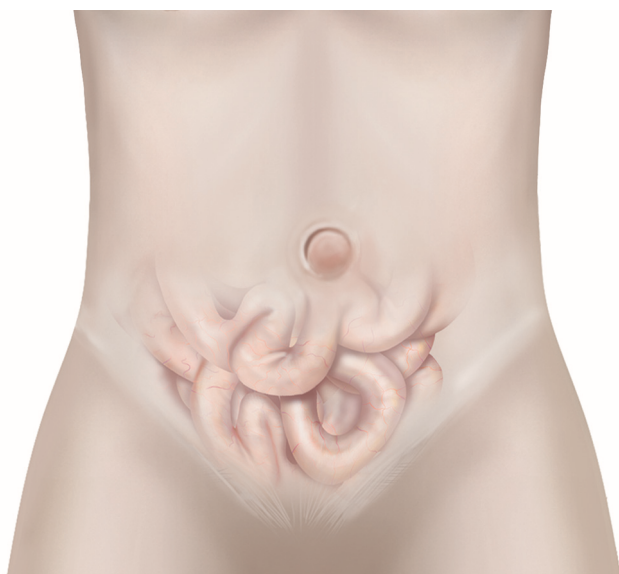


Figure 1
An umbilical hernia

A hernia can be dangerous because your intestines or other structures within your 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 the serious complications that a hernia can cause.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

In children under the age of about four, umbilical hernias tend to close. For older children and adults, the hernia will not get better without surgery.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is usually performed under a general anaesthetic. The operation usually takes about 30 minutes.

Your surgeon will make a cut near your umbilicus and remove the 'hernial sac'. They will close the weak spot with strong stitches or a synthetic mesh and close your skin.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

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

2 Specific complications

- Developing a lump under your wound
- Injury to structures within your abdomen
- Removing your umbilicus

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day. Increase how much you walk around over the first few days.

You should be able to return to work after two to four weeks, depending on the extent of surgery and your type of work.

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

The hernia can come back.

Summary

A hernia near your umbilicus is a common condition caused by a weakness in your abdominal wall. If left untreated, a hernia near your umbilicus can cause serious complications.

Acknowledgements

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