

## Patient information

# Open hernia repair

### What is it?

'Hernia' means the protrusion of an organ through an area of muscle, which had weakened. They most often occur in the groin area (known as inguinal or femoral) or the belly button (known as umbilical hernia).

The surgeon has recommended this operation to repair and strengthen the weakened area. This usually involves stitches and 'mesh'. These remain inside the body to prevent any further weaknesses.

### Post-operative discharge advice

- Skin stitches will dissolve and do not need to be removed.
- Steristrips will fall away in 7 – 10 days. If not you can gently remove them.
- Skin glue will fall away in 7 – 10 days. Do not pick or rub it off but allow it to come away naturally.
- Unless instructed otherwise after your discharge please leave your dressings on for 48 hours and keep them clean and dry. It is quite normal for some bruising around the operation site.
- You may have a quick bath / shower after 48 hours, thereafter daily.
- You may experience some moderate pain, which can be relieved by taking painkillers. If on discharge you are given 3 - 5 days supply to take home these can be taken as prescribed, otherwise paracetamol and ibuprofen or a similar medication is appropriate should you experience further pain when your initial supply of tablets is finished (see separate pain information leaflet).

- One of their side effects can be constipation. It is important you do not strain and to help prevent this we encourage you to eat a balanced diet with fresh fruit and vegetables, and drink plenty of fluids. If you are still experiencing problems, your local pharmacy will advise on any short-term medication.
- Gentle exercise is recommended and we encourage you to use an upright posture (this allows the mesh to sit correctly inside whilst you are healing). After 2 - 3 days you should be mobilising normally.
- You are advised to avoid sports activities and heavy lifting for 4 – 8 weeks. The British Hernia Association recommends restricting weight to 20lbs in the 4 weeks gradually increasing above 20lbs for up to 8 weeks.
- You may drive when you can safely perform an emergency stop and turn around to reverse safely. We recommend you do not drive for at least one week.

Special instructions.....  
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Return to work.....

If your surgery is straightforward you will not routinely return for a follow up appointment.

**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-you may have an infection
- bruising is severe

If you require any further advice, please contact the Martin Corke Day Surgery Unit on 01284 713050 between 7.45am and 8.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Outside of these hours please contact the surgical ward F5 on 01284 713262 and speak to the nurse in charge. Please have your hospital number on the discharge letter available.

Or NHS 111

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and*

*its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo)*  
<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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