

NHS
Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Advice following hernia repair

Adult Day Surgery Unit

This leaflet gives advice to aid your recovery following your procedure on the Adult Day Surgery Unit.

What is a hernia?

A hernia is a bulging of internal organs or intra-abdominal fat passing through a gap or defect in the muscle wall. Common types include:

- Inguinal/femoral hernia, located in the groin.
- Umbilical/para-umbilical hernia, located around the belly button.
- Incisional hernia, which forms around the site of an earlier surgery.

Repairing a hernia

The surgeon repairs your hernia by finding the defect in the abdominal wall and either stitching it closed or using a mesh patch to strengthen it.

After the operation

- You will have a dry dressing over the wound to absorb any discharge and to keep the wound clean.
- You may take a daily shower from _____ (*48 hours after surgery*) to promote healing.
- The dressing is shower-proof and can be removed after four days.
- You may then leave the wound uncovered to enable the healing process.
- If there is any redness or abnormal discharge from your wound, please contact your GP.

- *Please make an appointment with the practice nurse at your GP's surgery, for removal of stitches on _____
- *You have dissolvable stitches. These may take four to six weeks to dissolve.

* *Delete as appropriate.*

- The most common problem after hernia repair is swelling or bruising around the wound. If you have had an inguinal/femoral hernia repair, the bruising can extend to the groin area. This may take some time to fade.
- It is normal to experience some pain and discomfort after your operation and whilst the wound is healing. You should take regular painkillers (such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen) to help relieve your pain.
- If your pain is worsening, and there are signs of infection (spreading redness of the skin, weeping from the wound, feeling ‘flu-like) it is important that you seek medical attention as you may need a course of antibiotics.
- Do not drive until you can safely do an emergency stop (up to 2 weeks) but please check with your motor insurance company before driving a vehicle.
- You should stay off work for _____ (please ask nursing staff for a fit note if required).
- You may need to refrain from work for longer than this, depending on the healing process. Please make an appointment with your GP if this needs to be reviewed.
- For your comfort, it may help to hold your wound with one hand if you are going to sneeze, cough or laugh. This technique is also useful when moving from sitting to standing or vice versa.
- You may need to gently modify your activity for the first three days, then to gradually increase your mobility to your normal level. Moving around will help with the healing process.

- Avoid vigorous exercise/activity for four to six weeks and heavy lifting for six weeks following the operation. This is to avoid straining the repair.
- Expect some discomfort for up to three months following the operation, as the tissues heal.
- For any problems regarding wound discomfort or weeping, please telephone the Adult Day Surgery Unit for advice. Out of hours, contact NHS 111.

If there is anything you do not understand or if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to discuss them with your nurse.

During the first 24 hours following your discharge

If you have any further concerns about your surgery, please telephone the ADSU: 0118 322 7622.

Opening hours are 7.30am to 10.00pm Monday-Friday. If you need help/advice outside these hours, please telephone the Royal Berkshire Hospital switchboard on 0118 322 5111 and ask for the on-call surgery doctor. Please note that this should be for emergencies only.

After 24 hours, please seek advice from your GP or call NHS 111.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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