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GS02lite 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 abdominal wall behind the umbilicus (belly button), caused by the way babies develop in the womb. If the contents of the abdomen push through, this produces a lump called a hernia (see figure 1).

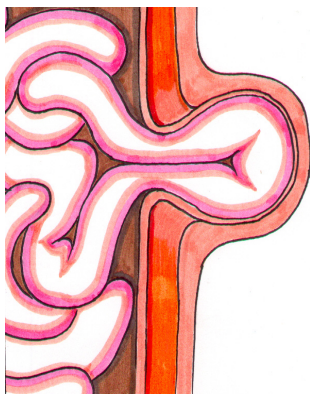


Figure 1

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

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?

In children under the age of about four, umbilical hernias tend to close on their own. For older children and adults, the hernia will not go away without an operation.

What does the operation involve?

Surgery to repair paraumbilical and umbilical hernias is usually performed under a general anaesthetic. The operation usually takes about half an hour.

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

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 the wound
- Injury to structures within the abdomen
- Removing the umbilicus

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day.

You should increase how much you walk around over the first few days after your operation.

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, you should ask a member of the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

The hernia can come back.

Summary

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