



# HERNIA REPAIR

*Date of Surgery* \_\_\_\_\_

Please bring this booklet the day of your surgery.

QHC#386

## **What is a Hernia?**

A hernia (also known as a rupture) is a weakness in the abdominal wall, which often results in the protrusion of the intestine (bowel) or other tissue through this weakened area. Hernias can occur at different sites around the abdominal area. This weakness may be present at birth or may result from lifting, trauma, coughing, obesity or pregnancy. A Hernia repair may be done through an open incision or laparoscopically (several small incisions). Your surgeon will decide which method is better for you.

## **Common Types of Hernias**

*Incisional Hernia* (occurs at the site of a previous incision)

*Umbilical Hernia* (a weak spot in or around the navel)

*Femoral Hernia* (occurs as a lump just below the groin)

*Inguinal Hernia* (a weak spot in the groin)

## **Day of Surgery**

Arrive at the hospital at your scheduled time. After admission and preparation for surgery, you will go to the Operating room. The surgery takes approximately 1-2 hours.

Depending on the size and location of the hernia, you may go home the same day or stay in the hospital for 1-2 days. Your surgeon will discuss this with you.

## After Surgery

Pain medication may be required to relieve incision discomfort. Some pain medications can cause constipation. Drink plenty of water and eat a high fibre diet (prunes, fresh fruit, vegetables). A mild laxative may be required. Avoid constipation to prevent straining.

Nausea, vomiting and dizziness may be experienced for 24 hours after your surgery. You may obtain an anti-nausea medication from any pharmacy without a prescription i.e. Gravol (suppository or pill) or Bonamine (chewable tablet) to relieve these symptoms.

Diet as tolerated. The first 24 hours you may want only fluids and toast or crackers. Drink plenty of fluids (water, juice) if you are not nauseated.

Deep breathing every hour while awake will help keep your lungs clear. If you need to cough, place a pillow or your hand over your incision to decrease any strain on the incision and to lessen pain.

Incisions are to be kept clean and dry for the first day after your surgery. Then you may shower and bathe as usual. If the tapes on your wound fall off, don't worry. If they have not fallen off in one week, then you can remove them yourself. Your stitches are hidden and will go away on their own.

## After Surgery

You may notice some swelling in your groin and men may also have swelling in the scrotum and/or penis. This is common and is normal.

Ice packs to the area when possible for the first three days or wearing supportive underwear may help.

Rest when you get home. Limit activities for 24 hours. Try not to favour the wound by limping or walking hunched over. The wound will heal best with your normal posture.

Slowly increase your activity being careful not to overdo it. If you are tired or have discomfort, stop what you are doing and rest. A daily activity, such as a walk is recommended as tolerated.

Ask your surgeon when you may return to work.

**No lifting or heavy work until you follow-up with your surgeon.**

You may gradually return to previous level of sexual activity. Certain positions may be more comfortable than others but, as with any activity, if it hurts, don't overdo it.



**Call your doctor or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you are experiencing:**

- Increased swelling in scrotum
- Increased swelling around the incision
- Fever
- Nausea lasting longer than 24 hours
- Increased pain not relieved by your prescription medication
- Unable to pass urine

## **Appointment**

Call your surgeon's office the next working day to make a follow-up appointment.

## **Special Instructions**

## **Questions?**

Developed by: Surgical Services, 2003

Approved by: Department of Surgery, Quinte Health Care

Revised: June, 2009