

General Surgery – Hernia Repair

Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital.

Guidance for Patients

Whilst you are waiting for your surgical intervention, please avoid any heavy lifting or strenuous activities which can also put further strain on your hernia. These include lifting furniture, boxes, or other heavy objects. It is recommended that you get assistance lifting heavier items, especially if you have a larger hernia.

It is important that while you are waiting for your surgery you remain as medically fit and active as possible.

If you have any long-standing conditions such as high blood pressure or diabetes you should get this reviewed at your doctor's surgery to make sure it remains well controlled. This will also help prevent any unnecessary delays when you come for your pre-operative assessment. Maintaining a well-balanced diet is also important, as is reducing any excessive weight that may be impacting on your general health. If you are a current smoker it would be advisable to seek support to help with stopping. Alcohol consumption should be within accepted limits.

You should continue to take your prescribed medications and only stop after consultation with your GP.

It is recommended that you take regular exercise (20 minutes per day until you are short of breath, increasing a bit at a time). Take a brisk walk or consider an exercise bike.

Support is available at **Healthy Cornwall** to help you with:

- Weight management
- Healthy eating
- Stopping smoking
- Physical activity

Contact **Healthy Cornwall** at:

- Telephone - 01209 61500
- Email – healthy.cornwall@cornwall.gov.uk
- Website – www.healthycornwall.org.uk

Good Mental Health

There are many ways you can keep your mental health fit and well, just as you would your physical health.

Support is available at [Mental health - NHS Kernow CCG - NHS Kernow CCG](#)

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

Other Useful Information

Further links which may help you manage your condition whilst you await treatment:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/>

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

You should go attend the Emergency Department straight away if you have a hernia and you develop any of the following symptoms:

- sudden, severe pain
- being sick
- difficulty pooing or passing wind
- the hernia becomes firm or tender, or cannot be pushed back in

These symptoms could mean that either:

- the blood supply to a section of organ or tissue trapped in the hernia has become cut off (strangulation)
- a piece of bowel has entered the hernia and become blocked (obstruction)

A strangulated hernia and obstructed bowel are medical emergencies and need to be treated as soon as possible.

Otherwise, if you are concerned that your condition or symptoms are deteriorating since you were referred to us, please contact the Planned Care Patient Support Team on 0800 0357777. You will be asked to detail the changes in your condition/symptoms since seeing your GP at the time you were referred or following listing for surgery, and this will be passed to the clinical team will re-assess your priority.

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

Contact Us

Email: rch-tr.accessteam@nhs.net

Telephone: 01872 255084