

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. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Guidance for Patients

Whilst you are waiting for your hernia repair, 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's recommended that you get assistance lifting heavier items, especially if you have a larger hernia.

Other than those precautions it is important that you stay as healthy as you can both physically and mentally. That will help you get the best results in the long term. If you have any long-standing conditions such as high blood pressure you should get this regularly reviewed at your GP 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 or drink heavily, it would be advisable to seek support to help with stopping. The NHS website has lots of tools and support to help with losing weight, getting active, quitting smoking and drinking less, all of which are good for your health generally, but if you are due to have an operation, they can also help you to recover more quickly from it.

For help and support with losing weight visit: www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight/

For advice on eating well visit: www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/

For help and support with getting or keeping active visit: www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/

For help and support with quitting smoking visit: www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/

For help and support with drinking less alcohol visit: www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

You should attend A&E straight away if you have a hernia and you develop any of the following symptoms:

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

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

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.

If your hernia is getting bigger, is causing worsening symptoms or is becoming difficult to push back please contact the secretaries and let us know.

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, seven days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

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

Contact Us

Email: BariatricsandupperGIsecretaries@SomersetFT.nhs.uk

Telephone: 01823 342100