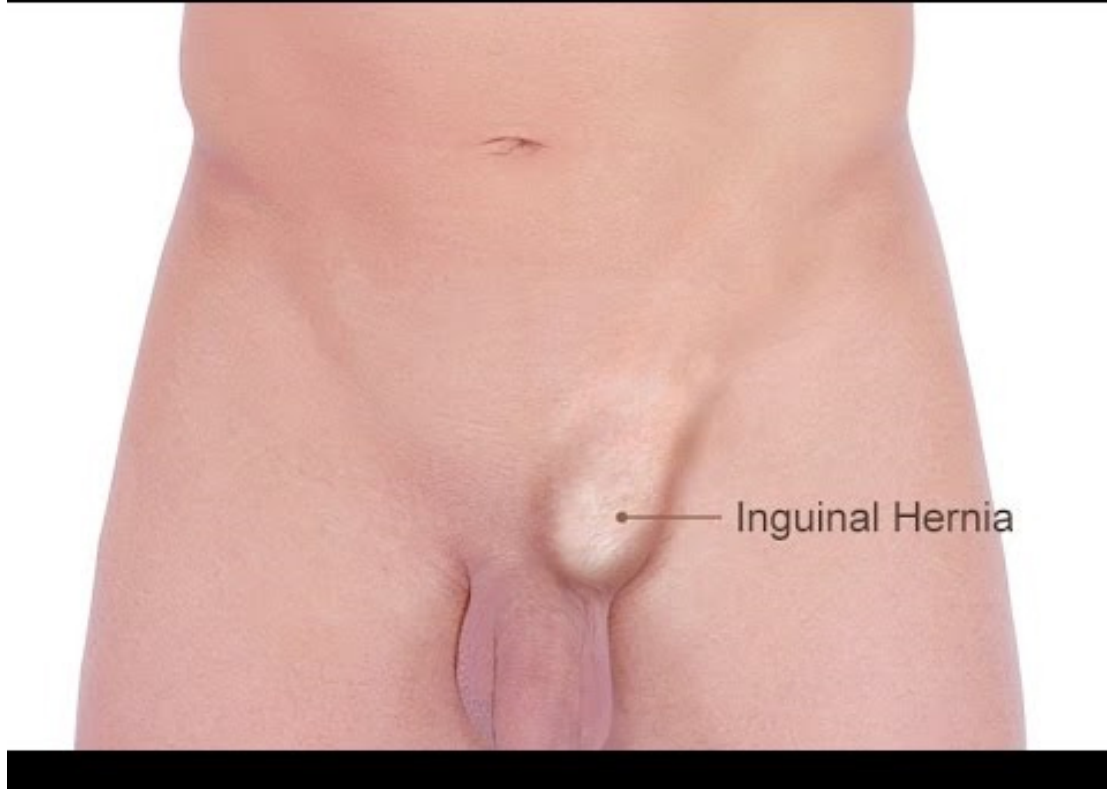


Inguinal hernia



What is an Inguinal Hernia?

An inguinal hernia occurs in the groin area when fatty or intestinal tissues push through the inguinal canal. The inguinal canal resides at the base of the abdomen. Both men and woman have an inguinal canal. In men, the testes usually descend through this canal shortly before birth. In women, the canal is the location for the uterine ligament. If you have a hernia in this passage, it results in a protruding bulge that may be painful during movement.

Many people don't seek treatment for this type of hernia because it may not cause any symptoms. Prompt medical treatment can help prevent further protrusion and discomfort.

What are Symptoms of Inguinal Hernia?

These types of hernias are most noticeable by their appearance. They cause bulges along the pubic or groin areas that can increase in size when you stand up or cough. This type of hernia may be painful or sensitive to the touch.

Other symptoms may include:

- pain when coughing, exercising, or bending over
- burning sensations
- sharp pain
- a heavy or full sensation in the groin
- swelling of the scrotum in men

What are Causes and Risk Factors of Inguinal Hernia

There isn't one cause for this type of hernia, but weak spots within the abdominal and groin muscles are thought to be a major contributor. Extra pressure on this area of the body can eventually cause a hernia.

Risk factors can increase your chances of this condition. Examples of risk factors include:

- heredity
- personal history of hernias
- being a male
- premature birth
- overweight or obese
- pregnancy
- cystic fibrosis
- chronic cough
- constipation.
- standing for long periods of time

Types of Inguinal Hernias

Inguinal hernias can be either indirect or direct. An indirect inguinal hernia is the most common type. It often occurs in premature births, before the inguinal canal can fully develop. However, this type of

hernia can occur at any time during your life. This condition is most common in males.

A direct inguinal hernia most often occurs in adults. The popular belief is that weakening muscles during adulthood lead to a direct inguinal hernia, this type of hernia is more prevalent in men.

Inguinal hernias can also be incarcerated or strangulated. An incarcerated inguinal hernia happens when tissue becomes stuck in the groin and can't go back on lying flat. Strangulated versions are more serious medical conditions that restrict blood flow to the small intestine or to fat that hernia contains. Strangulated hernias are life-threatening and require emergency medical care.

How a Diagnosis of an Inguinal Hernia is made?

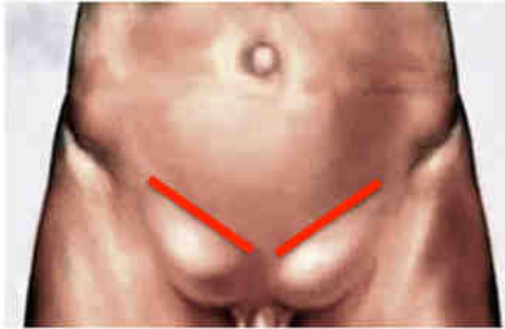
A doctor can easily push these hernias back into your abdomen when you are lying down. However, if this is unsuccessful, you may have a strangulated inguinal hernia. Your doctor can make this determination during a physical exam. During the exam, your doctor will ask you to cough while standing so they can check the hernia when it's at its largest.

How to Treat an Inguinal Hernia?

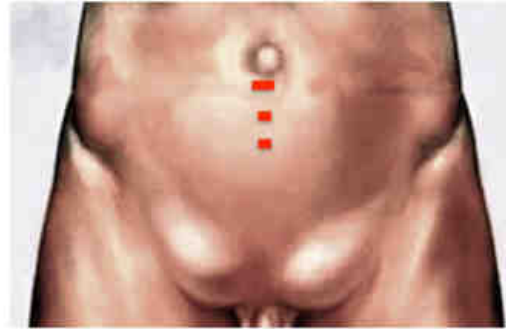
Surgery is the primary treatment for inguinal hernias. It's a very common operation and a highly successful procedure when done by a well-trained surgeon. It can be done by either "open" repair or laparoscopic surgery (keyhole surgery).

Open repair involves making an incision into the groin and returning the abdominal tissues to the abdomen and repairing the abdominal wall defect. Laparoscopy uses several short incisions rather than a single, longer incision. This surgery may be preferable if you want a shorter recovery time. Both repairs utilise mesh.

Open versus laparoscopic repair of inguinal hernia



groin incision



key holes

How to Prevent an Inguinal Hernia?

Although you can't prevent genetic defects that may cause hernias, it's possible to lessen the severity of hernias by:

- maintaining a healthy weight
- eating a high-fiber diet
- not smoking
- avoiding heavy lifting

What is inguinal hernia repair?

Inguinal hernia repair, inguinal herniorrhaphy, and open hernia repair are various names for the surgery that corrects this condition. During the procedure, the bulging tissues will be pushed back into the abdomen while stitching and reinforcing the portion of the abdominal wall containing the defect with mesh. Mesh is a medical fabric.

Surgery isn't always necessary, but hernias generally don't improve without it. In some cases, an untreated hernia can become life threatening.

Do I need an inguinal hernia repair?

Immediate surgery isn't always recommended when a hernia isn't causing a problem. However, adult hernias won't resolve without treatment. They may also become larger and more uncomfortable over time. Most people find the bulge from a hernia to be painless. However, coughing, lifting, and bending might cause pain and discomfort. In general these are the indication for surgery:

- your hernia gets larger
- pain develops or increases
- you have difficulty performing daily activities

A hernia can become very dangerous if your intestines become twisted or trapped. If this happens, you may have:

- fever
- increased heart rate
- pain
- nausea
- vomiting
- darkening or redness of the bulge



If you have any of these symptoms, contact your doctor immediately. This is a life-threatening condition requiring emergency surgery.

What are the risks associated with inguinal hernia repair?

The following are some of the risks specific to inguinal hernia repair:

- The hernia may eventually come back.
- You may experience prolonged pain at the site.
- There could be damage to blood vessels. In men, the testicles could be harmed if connecting blood vessels are damaged.
- There could be nerve damage or damage to nearby organs.

How do I prepare for inguinal hernia repair?

When you come for consultation before the surgery, bring a list of all the prescription and over-the-counter medications you take. Make sure you ask for instructions about which medications you need to

stop taking before surgery. This usually includes drugs that interfere with the blood's ability to clot, such as aspirin. You will need to stop eating or drinking for minimal of 6 hours before admission for your surgery. You will also need to arrange for someone to drive you home from the hospital after surgery.

What is the recovery for inguinal hernia repair?

You will encourage getting up about an hour after surgery. This surgery is often as a day procedure. However, you may have to remain in the hospital overnight.

If you have open surgery, it may take up to six weeks for a full recovery. With laparoscopy, you'll probably be able to get back to your normal activities within a few days and able to heavy weight lifting and exercises in 2 weeks.

Pain at site of surgery is expected, the anaesthetist will provide you with regular painkillers. Miner discolouration and discomfort in groin and /or scrotum is uncommon and usually resolve spontaneously.

When is my post surgery appointment?

My office usually makes it for you in 4 weeks. But if you need to see me earlier, please make a call and ask for earlier appointment.

Karim Ghanim

MBCHB FRACS

Perth Surgical Clinic

