

## Inguinal Hernia Repair (child)

This document will give you information about an inguinal hernia repair. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

### What is an inguinal hernia?

An inguinal hernia is where the contents of the abdomen push down towards the scrotum.

An inguinal hernia happens at the inguinal canal. This is a narrow passage where, in boys, blood vessels supplying the testicle pass through the abdominal wall. Usually the passage closes shortly after your child is born. If it remains open, the contents of the abdomen can push down towards the scrotum (see figure 1).

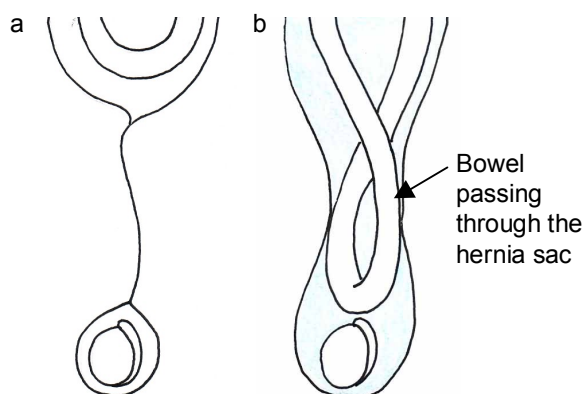


Figure 1

a The connection between the abdomen and the testicle usually closes

b Sometimes the connection remains open, leading to a hernia

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?

Your child should no longer have the hernia. Surgery should prevent your child from having any serious complications.

### Are there any alternatives to surgery?

The hernia will not go away without an operation.

### What does the operation involve?

Most inguinal hernias in children are repaired through a cut in the groin.

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic.

Your surgeon will make a cut in the groin and remove the 'hernial sac'.

### What complications can happen?

#### 1 General complications of any operation

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection in the surgical wound
- Unsightly scarring
- Inflammation

#### 2 Specific complications of this operation

- Developing a lump under the wound
- Developing a swelling around the testicle
- Injury to structures within the hernia
- Injury to nerves
- Damage of the blood supply to the testicle
- The testicle may come to lie higher in the scrotum
- Damage to the tube that carries sperm

## How soon will my child recover?

Your child should be able to go home the same day or the day after. Your doctor will tell you when your child can return to school.

In a small number of cases the hernia can come back.

## Summary

An inguinal hernia is a common condition caused by a weakness in the abdominal wall near the inguinal canal. If left untreated, an inguinal hernia can occasionally cause serious complications.

## Further information

You can get further information from:

- [www.aboutmyhealth.org](http://www.aboutmyhealth.org) - for support and information you can trust
- NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 (0845 606 46 47 - textphone)
- [www.eidohealthcare.com](http://www.eidohealthcare.com)

## Acknowledgements

Author: Mr Jonathan Sutcliffe FRCS and Mr Shailinder Singh FRCS (Paed. Surg.)

Illustrations: Hannah Ravenscroft RM

**This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.**



PS01 lite

Expires end of Dec 2008