

GS23lite Laparoscopic Incisional Hernia Repair

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

What is an incisional hernia?

Any operation on your abdomen needs a cut that is closed with stitches. Sometimes your wound does not heal properly, resulting in the contents of your abdomen pushing through. This produces a lump called a hernia (see figure 1).



Figure 1
An incisional hernia

A hernia can be dangerous because your intestines or other structures within your abdomen can get trapped and have their blood supply cut off (strangulated hernia).

What are the benefits of surgery?

You should no longer have the hernia. Surgery should prevent serious complications.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

You can sometimes control the hernia with supportive clothing or simply leave it alone. It will not get better without surgery.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes one to two hours. Your surgeon will make several small cuts on your abdomen. They will insert surgical instruments, along with a telescope, inside your abdomen and perform the operation.

Your surgeon will free up the structures from your abdomen that are stuck in the hernia, and insert a synthetic mesh to cover the weak spot.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Bleeding
- Unsightly scarring
- Blood clots

2 Specific complications

- Damage to structures such as your bowel, bladder or blood vessels
- Developing a hernia
- Injury to your bowel
- Surgical emphysema
- Developing a collection of blood or fluid
- Difficulty passing urine
- Injury to structures that come from your abdomen and are within the hernia

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home after one to two days.

Increase how much you walk around over the first few days. You may need to take painkillers to help you. Your doctor will tell you when you can return to work. Your doctor may tell you not to do any manual work for a while. Do not lift anything heavy for at least 6 weeks.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

The hernia can come back.

Summary

An incisional hernia is a weakness in your abdominal wall, which happens when previous wounds do not heal properly. If left untreated, an incisional hernia can cause serious complications.

Acknowledgements

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