



Information on Open Inguinal hernia repair

A hernia occurs when abdominal muscle layers that hold the inside contents in place are weakened so that contents bulge out.

Most commonly, a hernia occurs in the groin region because of the inherent weakness of the muscles in this region.

Once a hernia appears, it cannot be cured by medication. Surgical correction is the only way to fix the hernia.

If not fixed surgically, a hernia tends to increase in size over time.

Hernia can develop complications like irreducibility (contents of hernia fail to reduce back into the abdomen), bowel obstruction within the hernia and loss of blood supply to the contents of hernia, causing the death of the contents of the hernia.

These complications can be life-threatening and will need emergency surgery.

Elective surgery to fix a hernia before these complications occur is advisable in most instances.

Groin hernia can be surgically corrected by open or keyhole technique (laparoscopic).

In open hernia repair, the incision is made directly over the hernia site, and a surgical repair is done to strengthen the weak muscle.

A detailed description of these procedures can be found on the following sites.

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/surgery/open-inguinal-hernia-repair-male>

<https://www.sages.org/publications/patient-information/patient-information-for-laparoscopic-inguinal-hernia-repair-from-sages/>

I use a lightweight polypropylene mesh to strengthen the muscle layer.

The procedure will be done under general or occasionally spinal anaesthesia. Your anaesthetist will discuss the options with you before the procedure.

You will stay in the hospital overnight.

If you are well the following day, you will be allowed to go home with detailed post-operative instructions.

You are expected to avoid heavy exercise for the following six weeks.

You will be reviewed in the clinic two to three weeks after the operation.

Following risks are associated with this operation which I discuss with you in detail during the consultation.

1. Pain at the operation site: You will be given pain killers following the operation, which you can continue until the post-operative pain is well settled.
2. Urinary retention may happen in the immediate post-operative period. You may need a temporary urinary catheter until your bladder function recovers.
3. Chronic groin pain: this occurs in a small number of patients after groin hernia repair. The exact cause of this pain is unknown.
4. Recurrence: Recurrence of hernia may occur after a variable period in a small proportion of all hernia repairs.
5. Wound infection and mesh infection: Surgery is performed under antibiotic cover. However, wound infection and infection of mesh rarely occur. This will have to be treated appropriately, which may need further hospital admission and even further surgery.
6. Other possible general complications associated with anaesthesia and surgery. (Please see patient information on Surgery under anaesthesia).