

# WHAT TO EXPECT WITH HERNIA REPAIR

Exploring different types of  
hernias and your mesh options



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# YOU HAVE A HERNIA, NOW WHAT?

Getting diagnosed with a hernia can feel overwhelming. From multiple doctors' appointments to the actual surgery and recovery, you may need help to guide you through the process. This brochure will educate you on what a hernia is, different treatment options, and why having an open conversation with your surgeon is an important part of your treatment journey.

Hernias are **more common** than you may think



## What exactly is a **hernia**?

A hernia is a condition where part of an organ pushes through a weak point in the abdominal wall or groin area. Some hernias are present at birth, while others may be caused by certain conditions or habits.

Sometimes a hernia may become incarcerated, or unable to be pushed back. If this type of hernia stops blood flow to the bowel, strangulation occurs. This can cause pain and sometimes nausea, vomiting, or constipation.



## What are some **risk factors** for hernia?

- ▶ Obesity
- ▶ Diabetes
- ▶ Previous abdominal surgery
- ▶ Pregnancy
- ▶ Smoking
- ▶ Straining while lifting heavy objects
- ▶ Straining during bowel movements or urination
- ▶ Certain medications, such as steroids
- ▶ A weakened immune system due to cancer, transplant surgery, and other conditions

# THERE ARE MANY TYPES OF HERNIAS

Hernias have different names based on where they are located in the body.

## Hiatal and Paraesophageal

Occur when the upper part of the stomach moves into the chest cavity through the diaphragm

## Ventral

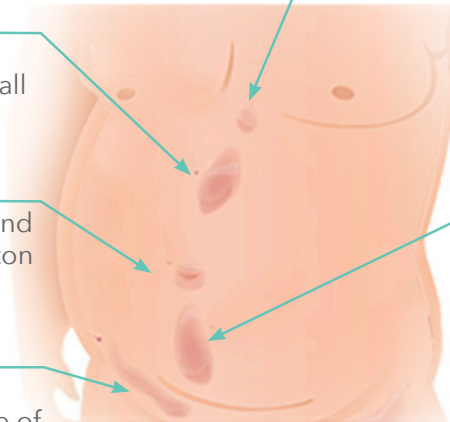
Involves the abdominal wall

## Umbilical

Located around the belly button

## Inguinal

The most common type of hernia. Located in the groin region and affects men more often than women



## Incisional

Occurs around prior surgical incision sites, usually in the abdominal area

## Femoral

Located in the upper thigh below the crease in the groin



What are some **common symptoms** of hernias?

- ▶ **Swelling or bulge** at or near the hernia site (groin, abdomen, scrotum)
- ▶ **Increased discomfort** at or near the bulge
- ▶ **Increased pain** with activity
- ▶ **Increase in the bulge size** over time
- ▶ **Pain while lifting**
- ▶ **A dull, aching sensation**
- ▶ A sense of **feeling full** or signs of **bowel obstruction**

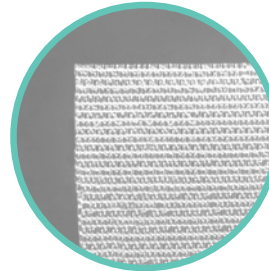




## WHAT IS A MESH?

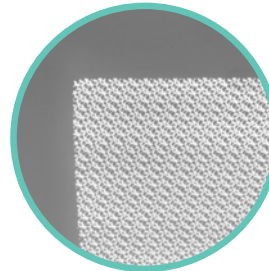
Surgeons often use surgical-grade mesh to patch the weakness or plug up the hole created by the hernia, instead of just stitching it. The mesh adds additional support to the hernia area and helps reduce the likelihood of your hernia coming back, or *recurring*. Just like there are many types of hernia repair options, there are also a number of mesh options to consider if you and your surgeon decide mesh placement during surgery is needed.

Understanding the **differences** between mesh options



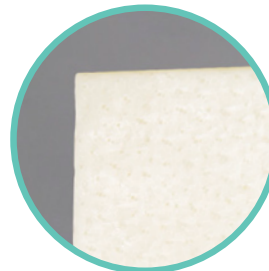
### Permanent synthetic mesh

Permanent synthetic meshes stay in your body and are typically made from different types of plastic, such as polypropylene (PP) or polyethylene terephthalate (PET).



### Absorbable synthetic mesh

Absorbable synthetic meshes are also made from types of plastic such as PP or PET; however, they are designed to either fully or partially break down over time.



### Biologic mesh

Biologic meshes are derived from animal tissue material and are designed to become part of your body.

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**Your surgeon's mesh selection may depend on the type of hernia repair you are having. Discuss with your surgeon which mesh may be right for you.**

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## HOW CAN MY HERNIA BE TREATED?

Depending on the type of hernia you have and other factors, there are many ways your surgeon can repair it. Talk to your surgeon so you know what to expect when you have surgery. Here are some common options surgeons may consider.

### **Suture** repair



Some minor hernias can be repaired using an incision to access the hernia and then sutures to reinforce the weak muscle or tissue.



### **Laparoscopic** or **robot-assisted** repair

Several smaller incisions, usually the size of a dime or keyhole, are made in the abdomen. Instruments guided by a camera are used to repair the hernia with mesh, sutures, and/or other repair techniques.



### **Open surgical** repair

Some surgeons are more likely to use an open surgical approach for larger and/or more complicated hernias. This means a surgical incision is made in order to repair the hernia. Most will be repaired with mesh and sutures, but some complex hernia procedures may involve reconstructing muscles and connective tissue in the abdomen to repair the hernia.

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**The type of hernia repair you receive may depend on several factors. Talk to your surgeon so you know what to expect from your surgery.**

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# SPEAK TO YOUR SURGEON TODAY

about your hernia repair options and  
what type of mesh is right for you.

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For more information, visit  
**[KnowYourMesh.com](https://www.knowyourmesh.com)**.

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