

# Hernia Surgery

Technology that helps  
us put things right

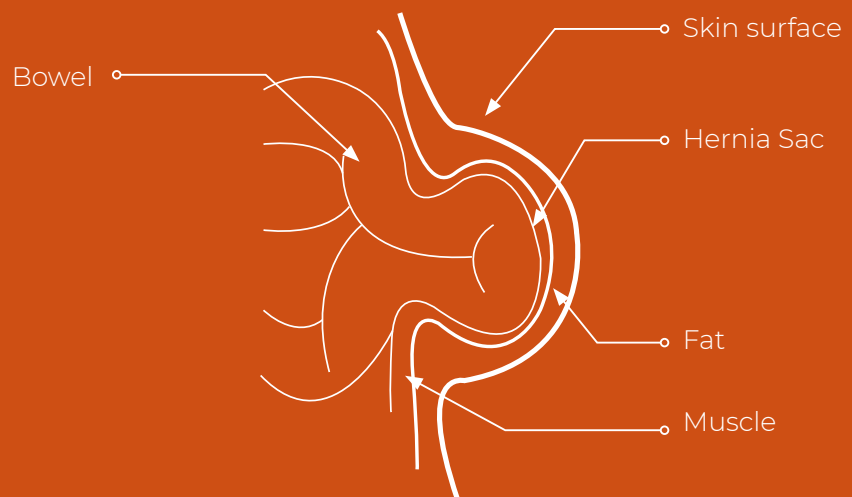


**Fact** Sheet

A Hernia occurs when the inside layers of the abdominal wall have weakened, resulting in a bulge or tear.

In the same way a balloon bulges between your fingers as you squeeze it, the inner lining of the abdominal cavity pushes through the abdominal wall to form a small balloon like sac. This can allow bowel or other abdominal contents to push through into the sac.

This is a diagram of a common hernia ►



### How do I know if I have one?

The common areas where hernias form is in the groin (inguinal or femoral), belly button (umbilical) or an incisional hernia (site of previous surgery). It is usually easy to feel a hernia. You may notice a bulge under the skin. You may feel pain when you lift heavy objects, cough or strain. Sometimes you feel a tearing pain while lifting and notice a bulge. There may be a squishing feeling when you push on the bulge. You may notice a lump and experience a dragging pain in the testicle or notice the bulge when urinating. The pain you experience may be sharp and occasional or a dull ache that gets worse after a busy day on your feet.

### What should I do about it?

A hernia does not get better over time, nor will it go away by itself but do not always need repair immediately. Hernias can get larger and as they do can become increasingly complex to manage. The hernia can result in severe pain and even require emergency surgery due to trapped bowel. Both men and women can have a hernia. Some people are born with a hernia or defect while some develop one. Severe continuous pain, redness, and tenderness may be signs that the bowel has become stuck (incarcerated or strangulated) in the hernia. This is an emergency and you should seek urgent medical advice.