

Shailinder Singh FRCS (Paed. Surg.) DM MBA
Consultant Paediatric Surgeon

PS01lite Inguinal Hernia Repair (child)

Expires end of December 2012
Issued January 2012

You can get more information and share your experience at www.aboutmyhealth.org
Tell us how useful you found this document at www.patientfeedback.org



www.rcseng.ac.uk

www.bads.co.uk

www.baps.ac.uk

www.rcsed.ac.uk

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 happens at the inguinal canal. This is a narrow passage where, in boys, blood vessels supplying the testicle pass through the abdominal wall. In girls, the connection is between the abdomen and labia. 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 or labia (see figure 1).

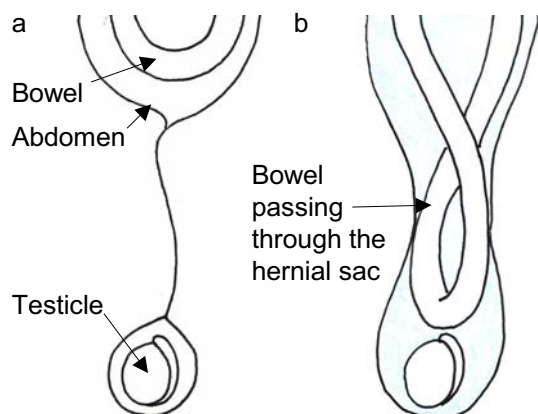


Figure 1

- 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 that a hernia can cause.

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 and usually takes between half an hour and an hour.

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

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

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

2 Specific complications

- 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. Most children make a full recovery. However, the hernia may come back.

Summary

An inguinal hernia is a common condition caused by the contents of the abdomen pushing down towards the scrotum or labia. If left untreated, an inguinal hernia can cause serious complications.

Acknowledgements

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