

Dear Patient:

Your doctor has scheduled you to have hernia surgery. There are different types of hernias. Hernias occur due to a weakness in the abdominal wall. During this surgery, your doctor will repair the weakened wall. In most cases, hernias can be repaired on an out-patient basis.

Before Your Surgery

- ❖ **DO NOT** eat or drink anything after midnight on the night before the surgery.
- ❖ Remove all makeup, finger and toe nail polish, and jewelry before coming to the hospital. Remove piercings (earrings, tongue ring, etc.).
- ❖ Your doctor and a nurse anesthetist will visit with you regarding the type of anesthesia you will receive during your surgery. Please tell the anesthetist if you have dentures or partials.
- ❖ When you arrive, you will be taken to your room to get undressed and into a hospital gown.
- ❖ You will have an IV started in the Same Day Surgery area.
- ❖ You will be taken to surgery about ½ hour prior to surgery.

During Your Surgery

The surgery takes about 30 - 60 minutes. You will have a heart monitor and blood pressure cuff applied, and a pulse oximeter (measures the oxygen in your blood) placed on your finger. You, your doctor, and the nurse anesthetist will decide on the best type of anesthesia for your surgery. When your doctor is ready, the anesthetist will begin your anesthesia.

You will go to the recovery room to awaken from the anesthesia. You will be monitored in the recovery room for approximately 1 hour.

After Your Surgery

- ❖ You will be taken back to your room for further monitoring. You will be encouraged to cough and deep breath frequently to keep your lungs clear.
- ❖ You may still have an IV through which you will receive fluids.
- ❖ Your incision will have staples with a dressing over the incision. You may notice swelling, bruising, tenderness, or the feeling of a “rope” under the incision. An icepack to the incision will help reduce swelling, bruising, and pain.
- ❖ If you had a “mesh” sheet inserted during the surgery to give added support to the weakened wall, you may remain in the hospital overnight. You may have a drain connected to a hemovac which suctions out drainage.

Pain/Medications: Your abdomen will be sore after your surgery. You can request pain medication which your doctor has ordered. For an umbilical or incisional hernia, the doctor may want you to wear an abdominal binder. You can support your abdomen with a small

pillow when getting out of bed or walking. While the incision is still tender, you'll be more comfortable wearing soft, loose-fitting clothing. Your doctor may order antibiotics to be given through your IV.

Diet: You will be given water to drink after your surgery. If you tolerate this without nausea or vomiting, you may have clear liquids such as sprite, jello, broth, decaf coffee, etc. If tolerated, you may begin eating a normal, well-balanced diet. You should avoid food that might make you constipated, gassy, or cause you to strain to have a bowel movement.

Dismissal: You will need to have someone drive you home from the hospital. Please remember that you still may feel sleepy/tired when you go home. Go directly home and keep all follow-up appointments with your doctor.

After Your Dismissal

Activity: You will be encouraged to walk soon after surgery. Short walks several times a day will speed up the healing process. You may ride in the car and climb stairs. You may tire easily and will need to rest 15 - 30 minutes between activities. **Do not** perform any strenuous activity such as bending, lifting (anything heavier than 5 - 10 lbs.), or playing contact sports until your doctor says it is okay. If you have young children, avoid picking them up or carrying them. You may resume other normal activities within 3 - 4 days. **DO NOT** drive or sign legal documents for 24 hours after your surgery.

Incision: Keep the incision clean and dry. You may remove the bandage after 48 hours. You can shower after the bandage is removed. Pat dry around the incision after showering. Do not soak in the tub. The staples will be removed in the doctor's office during your follow-up appointment (approximately 7 days).

Pain/Medication: Your doctor may give you a prescription for pain medication to take at home. A non-aspirin pain reliever, such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen, may also be used for pain. If an antibiotic is prescribed, continue taking the antibiotic until it is gone.

Infection: If you have any of the following, call your doctor.

- ⊗ Redness or swelling around the incision
- ⊗ Yellowish, green, or foul smelling drainage from your incision
- ⊗ Steady bleeding from your incision
- ⊗ Temperature above 101°
- ⊗ Chills or other flu like symptoms
- ⊗ Severe pain in the abdomen or anywhere in the body not relieved by pain medication
- ⊗ Persistent nausea and vomiting
- ⊗ Chest pain, trouble breathing, or difficulty urinating
- ⊗ Itching or rash after taking your pain medication or antibiotic

Please refer to your dismissal instructions for further information.