

Umbilical Hernia Repair

An Umbilical Hernia Repair is the name of the operation to repair an Umbilical Hernia. My **Umbilical Hernia Information Leaflet** gives more information about Umbilical Hernias.

HOW IS THE OPERATION DONE?

The operation is usually done as a **day case** procedure - meaning that you come in and go home on the same day. Occasionally there may be a surgical or anaesthetic reason to recommend an overnight stay. This will be discussed with you at the time of surgery.

ANAESTHETIC

The operation is done with the patient asleep under a **Full General Anaesthetic**.

As well as the general anaesthetic the patient will also have a local anaesthetic block to ensure that they do not feel any pain when they was up.

THE SURGERY

The surgeon will make a cut around half of the umbilicus (Belly Button) and close the opening in the tummy wall. The wound will then be closed with buried dissolving stitches. Sometimes the wound will be covered with either paper stitches or with a small dressing.

HOW LONG WILL THE SURGERY TAKE?

The surgery takes just over 30 minutes if it is uncomplicated. This does not include the time for the anaesthetic or recovery after the anaesthetic.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS TO THE SURGERY?

All operations carry risks. The risks of having an Umbilical Hernia Repair include:

- **BLEEDING** - This is uncommon and most often settles by itself.
- **INFECTION** - If this occurs then it will be treated with antibiotics
- **UNSIGHTLY SCARRING** - Occasionally when a child heals after having an operation the scar can be very prominent or unsightly. Unfortunately there is nothing that can predict if this will happen to your child and nothing specific can be done to prevent this from happening.



- **INJURY TO STRUCTURES WITHIN THE HERNIA** - There is a very small risk that the contents of the hernia may get injured during the surgery. This risk can be minimised with careful surgical technique. If an injury occurs and is identified during the operation this will be fixed during the operation.
- **RECURRENCE** - There is a small risk that the hernia can come back.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE OPERATION?

After the operation your child will wake up and be able to have something to eat and drink straight away. Most children who have this operation go home the same day. This may not be possible if your child has other medical problems or something unexpected happened during the operation.

It is not uncommon for children to feel a bit sick for the first 24 hours after an anaesthetic. You should encourage your child to drink lots of fluid. As long as he is drinking it does not matter if they are off their food for a day or two.

Give your child regular pain relief for the first couple of days after the operation. Giving pain killers regularly is much more effective than waiting for someone to complain of pain before giving them something.

Wait for 5 days before letting your child have a bath. If a dressing or paper stitches have been put on at the operation they will come off in a bath (if they have not fallen off sooner.)

Your child will be able to go back to school after around a week, but should not do any strenuous activities for about six weeks.

You should call the ward or your family doctor (GP) if:

- ▶ **Your child is in a lot of pain and pain relief does not seem to help**
- ▶ **Your child has a high temperature and paracetamol does not bring it down**
- ▶ **The wound site looks red, inflamed and feels hotter than the surrounding skin**