

Hernia or Hydrocele Repair

Information for parents



Shipwreck Ward, QAH (023) 9228 6391

Specialist Support

If you require this leaflet in another language, large print or another format, please contact the Health Information Centre Tel: (023) 9228 6757, who will advise you.



What is a hernia?

A hernia is a bulge caused by a hole (or defect) in the muscle layer of the abdomen. The commonest sites are the groin and the umbilicus. In children, hernias are usually present from birth and are not caused by any particular activity.

What is a hydrocele?

A hydrocele is a collection of fluid around or near the testicle. It is usually due to a normal hole from the abdomen failing to close as it should within two years of birth.

What is the operation?

The purpose of the operation is to close off a persisting hole (defect) in the muscle layer of the abdomen. The skin is stitched with invisible dissolving stitches. They do not need removing.

By law we must obtain written **consent** to any operation beforehand. Staff will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives before they ask you to sign a consent form. Young people are presumed to be able to give consent depending on their maturity and the nature of the decision. Where a child is not competent to give consent, only a person (or body) with parental responsibility may consent on the child's behalf. More detailed information is available www.dh.gov.uk

If you are unsure about any aspect of the treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to speak with a senior member of staff.

What happens if the operation is not performed?

A hernia will gradually get larger and more unsightly. Hernias in the groin can get stuck, leading to emergency hospital admission. A hydrocele will probably enlarge slowly and become more uncomfortable.

Getting over a general anaesthetic

Your child will be able to eat and drink normally. Start with a light diet. If there are any feelings of sickness, stick to clear fluids and dry biscuits until feeling better. Avoid sweets, chocolate and dizzy drinks at first.

Common side effect and risks

- Bruising is very common after surgery
- Following repair of a groin hernia or hydrocele, the area may become swollen. This will subside after a few weeks
- Following repair of an umbilical hernia, the overlying skin may be floppy. This is best left as it may improve with growth.
- Hernias can recur in about 3% of patients during subsequent years.

Bathing, play and school

Your child may begin bathing 24 hours after surgery and swimming one week later. Play and school may begin as soon as your child is comfortable – usually within a few days.

Further care a follow up

- Any dressings or medicine that may be necessary will be given and explained to you before you go home
- The stitches are dissolvable
- Leave the dressing in place for 2 days, then bath or shower as normal avoiding soap or bath additives on the wound
- Dry carefully and keep as clean and dry as possible
- If a community nurse has been arranged to call on your child, your named nurse will tell you and give you the appropriate information
- An appointment may be given for a check-up several weeks after surgery but often no appointment is offered. If your child is to have an outpatient appointment, the details will be posted to you.

Your child's GP

Your child's GP surgery has been informed of your child's admission today. You will be given a letter to take home which is for the GP should you need to call him/her to your home.

Contact details

If you have any queries or concerns please ring:

- Paediatric Department, A8 Shipwreck Ward Queen Alexandra Hospital : Tel: (023) 9228 6391
- Your child's GP if you feel it necessary, or if you feel warrants it, you may attend the Emergency Department

Information we hold about you and your rights under the Data Protection Act

Please refer to the booklet 'Your Healthcare Information – Your Rights! Our Responsibilities!' for further guidance.

How to comment on your treatment

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer your questions. However, if you have any concerns you can also contact the Patient Experience Service on 0800 917 6039 or E-mail:

portsmouthhospitals.patientexperience@porthosp.nhs.uk

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