Do you want to know?

Abdominal Hernias

F01
sheet 1/1

What is it?

An abdominal hernia is a protrusion of an organ or structure from its normal cavity through a congenital (present at birth) or acquired defect, usually in the muscle of the abdominal wall. Hernia is classified depending on its location (inguinal, femoral, umbilical or incisional). Hernias are usually repaired by surgery (herniorrhaphy).

What do you need to know?

Post Surgery (Repair of Hernia)

Drugs
Take medications as prescribed by your physician to relieve your pain.

Diet
Eat a high fiber diet (fresh fruits, vegetables, whole wheat bread and cereals, legumes such as dry beans, lentils, and nuts) and increase fluid intake 2–3 L/day if not contraindicated to help prevent constipation.

Activity
- Avoid activities that cause pressure to the area of the abdomen such as lifting, straining, and heavy exercises.
- Resume normal activity as tolerated.

Therapeutic Measures
- Support the incision site with your hand or a pillow while coughing to decrease pain.
- Apply ice packs to the scrotal area after inguinal hernia repair to minimize swelling.
- Elevate scrotum and use scrotal support in case of scrotal swelling.
- Perform wound care as indicated by your physician.

Considerations
- Avoid straining upon defecation for 3–4 weeks post surgery to prevent bleeding.
- Avoid heavy lifting 4–6 weeks post surgery.

INSTRUCTIONS

The content of this educational leaflet is of general information. Ask your physician or health care provider if this content applies to you.

Prepared by the Nursing Services in coordination with other health care disciplines.

© 2005 American University of Beirut Medical Center