



## Hernia

A hernia occurs when part of an organ (usually the intestines) protrudes through a weak point or tears in the thin muscular wall that holds the abdominal organs in place.

There are several types of hernias, based on where it occurs:

- Inguinal hernia -- appears as a bulge in the groin or scrotum. This type is more common in men than women.
- Femoral hernia -- appears as a bulge in the upper thigh. This type is more common in women than in men.
- Incision hernia -- can occur through a scar if you had abdominal surgery.
- Umbilical hernia -- a bulge around the belly button. Happens if the muscle around the navel doesn't close completely.

## Causes

Hernias can be seen in infants and children. This can happen when the lining around the abdominal organs does not close properly before birth. About 5 out of 100 children have inguinal hernias.

## Symptoms

Groin discomfort or groin pain aggravated by bending or lifting

- A tender groin lump or scrotum lump
- A non-tender bulge or lump in children

About 5 out of 100 children have inguinal hernias (more boys than girls). Some may not have symptoms until adulthood.

## Treatment

Most hernias can be pushed back into the abdominal cavity. However, if it cannot be pushed back through the abdominal wall, this can lead to a strangulated loop of intestine. If left untreated, this portion of the intestine dies because of loss of blood supply.

Almost all hernias require surgery, preferably before complications occur, to reposition the herniated loop of intestine and secure the weakened muscles in the abdomen.

**Please visit your Primary Care Physician.**

## Reference:

U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institute of Health (2007).

Retrieved on October 18, 2007 from [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)