

HERNIAS IN ADULTS

CRITERIA BASED ACCESS

Inguinal Hernia

Surgical intervention for inguinal hernia repair is supported for patients who meet the following criteria:

- Objective increase in size month by month

OR

- Pain or discomfort causing significant functional impairment. Significant functional impairment is defined as: Symptoms preventing the patient carrying out normal work or domestic activities

OR

- History of incarceration or real difficulty reducing the hernia.

Elective surgical treatment of asymptomatic inguinal hernias in adults is considered a treatment of limited clinical value and it is not normally funded by the CCG. Conservative management i.e. watchful waiting is an acceptable management option for mildly symptomatic or asymptomatic inguinal hernias.

Femoral Hernias

Femoral Hernias occur in the femoral canal posterior to the inguinal ligament. They are more common in females and should be referred for repairs when diagnosed as the risk of strangulation is greater.

Umbilical Hernias

These occur when some tissue pushes through the abdomen near to the umbilicus (belly button). Umbilical hernias are present from birth. In most cases of umbilical hernia, the hernias go back in and produce no functional symptoms. Umbilical hernia should only be referred for repair if painful and irreducible.

Paraumbilical Hernias

Paraumbilical hernias occur in adults and appear above the umbilicus. They are uncommon and usually small. They should be referred for repairs when diagnosed as the risk of strangulation is greater.

Incisional Hernias

This occurs when tissue pushes through a previous scar or wound. They are more common if you have had a scar in the past that has not healed well. For example, if the wound had an infection after the operation. They usually occur within two years of having an operation. Incisional hernias should only be referred if painful.

Hernia repair is not without complications, and therefore the risk/benefit for prophylactic surgery needs to be carefully considered.

A Patient decision aid is available for hernia at

<http://sdm.rightcare.nhs.uk/pda/>