

Caring for your child after a hernia repair

Will my child have pain?

- Your child will have some pain the day of surgery and possibly the next day.
- Unless the doctor has given you other instructions, you may give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®). Follow the directions on the package for your child's age and weight. If you are not sure how much to give, talk to your pharmacist.

How do I care for my child's incision?

- Always wash your hands before checking the incision area.
- The incision is closed with stitches (sutures) under the skin. The stitches will dissolve and do not need to be removed.
- The incision is covered with white bandages that look like paper (Steristrips™). These bandages should stay on the incision for about 7 days. Then they will start to curl and come off. If they come off sooner, it is usually not a problem and a new dressing is not needed. If the bandages do not come off after 7 days, gently take them off after a bath.
- When the bandages come off, the incision will look pink. The incision may feel a little thick under the skin. This is a normal part of healing and will go away in about 3 to 6 months.

When can my child have a bath or shower?

- Starting tomorrow your child may have a sponge bath. You can put your child in the tub but make sure that the water level is below the level of the incision.
- Your child can have a shower in 2 to 3 days. Pat the steristrips dry after each bath or shower.
- After 5 days your child can return to normal bathing.

What can my child eat and drink after surgery?

- Your child can have a light diet for the first 12 hours after surgery. This means foods such as soup, toast, milk, and jello. After 12 hours, your child can eat any type of food he or she wants to.
- Breastfeeding can be started as soon as your child is allowed to eat after surgery.

What activities can my child do after surgery?

- Your child can resume his or her usual activities when he or she feels comfortable doing so.
- For the first week after surgery your child should not go swimming or do strenuous activities such as riding a bike or playing contact sports such as soccer.

Your child will not need a clinic visit after surgery, unless a problem occurs or you have concerns about your child.

When should I call the surgeon?

Call the surgeon if you notice:

- Your child has a fever - a temperature higher than 38.5°C (101.3°F)
- Redness, swelling, bleeding or discharge from the incision.
- The steristrips or stitches give way and the incision opens. If this happens, put a bandage over the incision then call the doctor.
- A new swelling around the incision. This may be another hernia.
- You are concerned about your child.

To call McMaster Children's Hospital: 905-521-2100

Dr. Bailey	Ext. 73550
Dr. Fitzgerald and Dr. Cameron	Ext. 75231
Dr. Walton and Dr. Flageole	Ext. 75244
Julia Pond, Nurse Practitioner	Ext. 73618

After hours and on weekends, call 905-521-5030 and ask to speak with the Pediatric Surgeon on-call.

For urgent concerns or if your child looks unwell, bring your child to the Emergency Department at McMaster Children's Hospital. If you live outside of the Hamilton area, take your child to the nearest hospital emergency department.