

Robotic Inguinal Hernia Repair

An inguinal or groin hernia is a defect where contents such as fat, or intestines herniate (protrude) through the abdominal wall. This can cause pain but it can rarely be dangerous as it can cut the blood supply of the intestines. A Robotic or minimally invasive/laparoscopic repair is where your surgeon fixes the hernia through small incisions. This causes less pain and faster recovery.

Preparing for Surgery:

- Shower and shampoo your hair before surgery
- Eat a light meal the night before
- If you smoke, quit or cut down
- Make arrangements for another adult to drive you home after surgery.
- Some patients may be asked to start a Flomax (tamsulosin) pill one week before surgery to make urination easier after surgery. Be sure to pick up your prescription ahead of time. If you get dizziness on this new medication then stop taking it
- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your surgery. This includes water, gum, or mints. You can brush your teeth. If you have been told to take any medications, you may take them with a small sip of water

Day of Surgery

- Wear loose-fitting clothes that is easy to remove. You will change into a hospital gown.
- Do not use any makeup, hairspray, or perfume.
- Remove all jewelry or body piercings. Leave any valuables at home.
- You will be asked to remove contact lenses, hearing aids and dentures.
- The preoperative nurse will insert an IV line for fluids and medications.

The Procedure:

- A general anesthetic will be given. It will relax your muscles and make you fall into a deep sleep. It will prevent you from feeling pain during the operation.
- Your abdomen will be insufflated with carbon dioxide gas to help your surgeon see the hernia from the inside. The surgeon makes several small cuts, pulls the intestines from the hernia back into the abdomen, and repairs the hernia with mesh.
- A bladder catheter (Foley catheter) is placed after you are asleep and removed before you wake up. Initiating urine may be hard after surgery, this is common in male patients

After Surgery:

- You will be able to go home 2-4 hours after surgery.
- Start with bland foods since the anesthesia and pain medicine can make you nauseous.
- Your incision will be closed with internal dissolving stitches and surgical glue. The glue strip will fall off by itself 7-10 days after surgery.
- Do not lift more than 20 pounds for 2 weeks after surgery. It is OK to shower 1 day after surgery. Do not let your incisions get underwater in a tub or pool for 2 weeks postoperatively

- You are encouraged to walk and move around after surgery. This helps healing and prevents complications.
- Do not drive, use machinery, or make important decisions/sign legal documents until at least 24hr after surgery and until off of pain medications
- Do not expect a bowel movement the day after surgery. You should start having bowel movements within 2-3 days after surgery. Take plenty of fluids and pineapple juice or prune juice to prevent constipation. Take stool softeners or Miralax if you have not had a bowel movement 2 days after surgery.
- Expect some swelling and bruising in the hernia area.
- Some testicular swelling and bruising can be expected in the first week after surgery. More profound on patients on blood thinners. You can roll up a towel and place it under the scrotum to help reduce the swelling. Ice also helps

Pain Medication:

- You will be given a prescription for pain medication if needed. These are usually narcotics. Take as directed. These medications can upset your stomach so take it with some food. They can also cause constipation and are associated with addiction if abused. You do not have to take these medications if you do not need them
- For milder pain, you can use Extra Strength Tylenol. In addition, use an ice pack on the incision during the first 24 hours following surgery; or a heating pad after that. Do not fall asleep with a heating pad as it can cause burns.
- My preferred regimen for pain management includes taking Tylenol 500mg every 4 hours, Ibuprofen 600mg every 6 hours (with food), and narcotics for breakthrough and severe pain. For instance, take Tylenol at 8am, ibuprofen at 10am and Oxycodone at 12 pm and repeat as needed.

When to call your doctor:

- White, tan or green drainage from the incision
- Red, hot, or painful area around the incision or hernia site
- Fever over 101 degrees
- Severe pain unrelieved by medication
- Nausea and vomiting lasting more than 4 hours
- Inability to urinate even though bladder feels full 8 hours after surgery

Contact information

- Call Intercoastal Medical Group (IMG)
- Lakewood office 941-362-8662, The answering service will be available after 5pm, and you will be able to reach the "on call" physician
- Cattleman office 941-341-0042, from 12-1 pm the answering service will be on
- You can reach Dr. Hernandez through the portal for non-urgent problems or questions