

Recovering from hernia surgery



What to do after hernia surgery

There are general guidelines about what someone should do when recovering from any surgery. Please make sure you speak to your doctor regarding your specific recovery plan. Following doctor's instructions may help prevent infection and enhance healing.

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| Bathing | Depending upon the type of repair that a person has had, they may be able to shower in a day or two. A doctor will advise if incision(s) need to be kept dry, and for how long. |
| Walking | Walking increases circulation, which speeds healing, but doesn't strain the abdomen. A doctor will advise about when it is safe to resume physical activity. |
| Eating | A diet high in fiber, fresh fruits and vegetables, along with drinking lots of fluids, will help avoid constipation (which can be caused by pain medication and inactivity) and the strain that goes with it. Ask your doctor about using a stool softener or laxative. |
| Driving | The effects of anaesthesia can stay with you up to one week, this impairs the ability to drive safely. Talk to a doctor about when it's safe to drive. It is not recommended for a person to drive while taking prescription medication. Depending on the type of hernia repair, driving may strain the incision(s), so check with a doctor when it will be safe to drive. |
| Lifting | Avoid lifting for the first few days after surgery, then lift only very light objects that are easy to manage. Speak to a doctor about what you can lift safely during your recovery. It is best to use knees and back when lifting, not the abdominal muscles. |
| Working | Some people return to work within a week of having a hernia repair surgery, however, this will depend on the type of hernia surgery and the type of work. After surgery a person will tire more easily at first - consider working a partial day at first. If work involves a lot of physical activity, a person might not be ready to return to work for a few weeks. Talk with your doctor about how and when to resume working. |
| Sports | After a hernia repair, a person will not likely be able to play sports or engage in strenuous exercise for a few weeks. It will depend largely on the type of surgery that was had and the type of activity. Make sure you ask your doctor about resuming exercise routines or playing sports. |
| Sex | Ask your doctor when it is appropriate for you to resume sexual activity. Your physical comfort will provide a good guide. |

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