



Dorset HealthCare
University
NHS Foundation Trust

Inguinal Hernia Operation

Information for patients,
relatives and carers

A blue heart-shaped logo containing the text 'Excellence', 'Compassion', and 'Expertise' stacked vertically. 'Excellence' is in yellow, 'Compassion' is in white, and 'Expertise' is in orange.

Excellence
Compassion
Expertise

Welcome to Swanage Hospital Day Surgery Unit

On the day of your procedure you will need a friend or relative to drive you to Swanage hospital and to collect you. There is ample roadside parking, you can be dropped off and collected right outside the main door, however we have very limited waiting and refreshment facilities for relatives. If you need your companion to stay with you please speak to a member of staff when you arrive. You will also need a responsible adult to stay with you 24 hours after discharge from hospital. It is not advisable to travel on public transport

We advise you not to drink alcohol, drive or operate machinery for 24 hours after a general anaesthetic. You may also be advised not to drive for a longer period of time depending upon the operation you have had.

A bedside locker is available to keep personal belongings in, **but you are strongly advised not to bring in any valuables, especially jewellery or money.** It is suggested that you wear warm loose fitting clothes and we ask you to please have a bath or shower before coming into hospital. Hair removal from the surgical site will be done on the day if necessary.

Waiting

There may be a wait of a few hours on the Day Surgery Unit before you have your operation. This is to allow adequate time for preparation and safety checks, ensuring that our standards are met for each patient. We suggest that you allow approximately five hours from admission to discharge, and you may wish to bring something to read to help pass the time.

On the day

When you arrive on the ward you will be admitted by a nurse and required to change into a theatre gown and wear an identity bracelet as part of our safety procedure. Before your operation the doctor will ask you to sign a consent form and answer any questions you may have.

Information for patients having a general anaesthetic

This means you will be given an injection, which will send you into a very deep sleep while the operation takes place. You will wake up in the recovery ward and a recovery nurse will stay with you until you are ready to go back to the main ward. This is usually about 15-20 minutes.

Morning operation

It is vital you have nothing to eat after midnight before your operation (this includes sucking sweets and chewing gum). You may drink water only until 6am. However, it is also a good idea to have a snack and drink before you go to bed so that your body is not too dry.

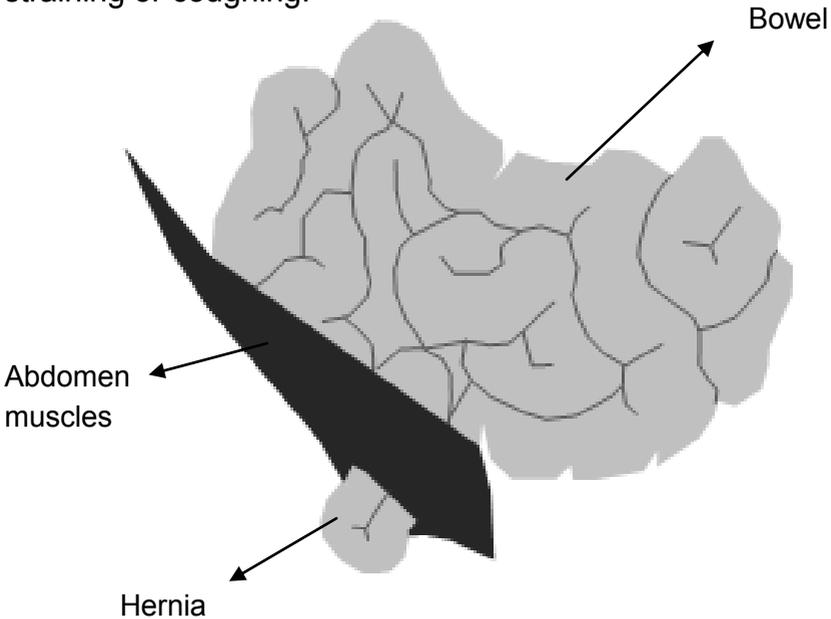
Afternoon operation

It is vital you have nothing to eat after 8am on the day of the operation (this includes sucking sweets and chewing gum). You may drink water only until 11am. We do advise an early light breakfast before 8am.

Starving for longer than we ask does not mean you are less likely to be sick and will make you feel more uncomfortable than necessary.

What is an Inguinal Hernia Repair?

An inguinal hernia is a bulge you can see or feel in the groin. This occurs when the lining around the bowel bulges through a weak part of the abdominal wall. It may result from physical straining or coughing.



To repair the hernia, a surgeon will actually push the lump back inside your body and cover it with a patch of mesh to keep it there.

Before the operation the area will need to be shaved to prevent hairs getting caught in the wound.

The operation can take 30-60 minutes depending on the size of the repair and is usually performed under a general anaesthetic. Local anaesthetic is also put around your wound site to help keep you comfortable when you wake up.

Specific instructions following your operation

- Driving a car should be avoided for 14 days from the date of the operation. A tender groin might prevent a quick reaction in an emergency, so only return to driving when the wound is comfortable.
- During the first 24 hours after the operation, it is good to move around as this helps reduce stiffness.
- The wound will be covered with skin glue. Daily showers afterwards is fine. Avoid baths until wound has scabbed over.
- Eat healthily, including plenty of brown bread, fruit and vegetables to avoid constipation.
- Light exercise and walking is good.
- Strenuous exercise **MUST BE AVOIDED FOR 1 MONTH**
E.g. heavy lifting, digging the garden, golf, or swimming.

Returning to work

If your job involves heavy lifting which cannot be avoided, please take at least **two months** off work in order to prevent recurrence of the hernia. Your GP will give you the necessary certification – when you then return, you should be careful as your general physique may be out of condition.

A job which does not involve heavy work of any kind can usually be taken up again after **two to three weeks**.

In the event that you need to see your GP or other healthcare professional regarding your surgical wound please can you let us know by ringing 01929 475008

Things to expect

- Bruising around the wound and in nearby areas is bound to occur and will usually clear up within a month. If this causes swelling or redness please see your GP in case infection has occurred.
- Healing inside will take time. Lumpy areas are quite normal and may not disappear completely for several weeks.
- Numbness of the skin around the wound can occur. It may improve, but even if the numbness is permanent, it is scarcely noticeable and there is no loss of any function. Numbness is due to inadvertent damage of a small nerve supplying the skin, which is not visible to the naked eye.
- A further and very rare **temporary** complication can occur as a result of the local anaesthetic used during the operation spreading unusually deeply. This can result in a numbness of the thigh and leg and even slight weakness. This is very rare and usually only lasts a few hours.
- You can expect to feel some pain and discomfort which will settle as healing takes place over the next few weeks. Ensure you have some Paracetamol or Ibuprofen at home if tolerated. Stronger pain killers may be given if needed.

We will not normally need to see you for follow up in outpatients department. Your GP will always be happy to see you if there are any problems and if necessary another appointment at the hospital could then be arranged.

Further advice

If you would like any further information or if you experience any problems within the first 24 hours after your appointment please contact:

Day surgery unit Swanage Hospital 01929 475008

Admissions office 9- 5 pm 01929 475047

Minor injuries 8- 8 pm 01929 475009

You could also contact your GP

Dorset Out of Hours Medical Service on 111

Poole Hospital A+E 01202 442202 (out of Hours)

Emergency 999

Useful websites

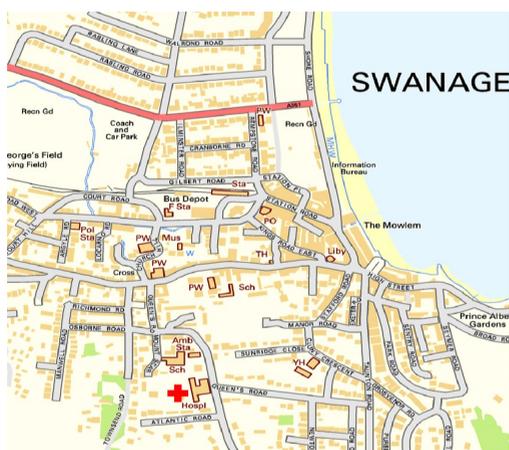
www.patient.co.uk—information on tests and procedures

How to find Swanage Hospital

By road: The Sandbanks to Studland chain ferry can be used if you are coming from the Bournemouth and Poole area. On-road parking is available outside the hospital on Queens Road.

By bus: The Bus Depot in the centre of Swanage is the nearest stop, approximately a 10 minute uphill walk to the hospital. A taxi rank is also located at the Bus Depot.

By rail: Wareham station is the nearest mainline service.



The information in this leaflet is available in additional languages and alternative formats. Please contact the Trust for further details.

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