

Inguinal Hernia – Talking about your care options!

The doctor has said that you have an **inguinal hernia**. This leaflet is about what you can do. With an inguinal hernia, you have two main choices. They are to make lifestyle changes or take pain killers. An operation is not suitable for everyone, so may not be an option for you.

Think about what you need, what you enjoy doing and how you live.

Below are some questions you might want to ask about the different treatments		
Questions	Lifestyle and weight loss	Painkillers
What is the treatment?	You will probably need to make lifestyle changes like avoiding heavy lifting. It could also mean wearing a special belt called a 'truss'. You will need to watch for changes to the hernia.	You can support lifestyle changes by also taking painkillers like ibuprofen or paracetamol. They help some people with their pain.
What will happen to my symptoms?	Symptoms don't go away completely, and they might get worse. But if this happens you may want to take painkillers.	As you take painkillers you should be able to do more and this can help reduce pain further.
Are there any risks?	Sometimes even if you make lifestyle changes the hernia may get bigger, more uncomfortable or stuck (irreducible) in the groin or scrotum. If this happens you may need an emergency operation to prevent serious problems like bowel obstruction.	Side effects are rare but as with any medicine there may be some. For example anti-inflammatories like ibuprofen can increase our risk of stomach bleeding.
What will my quality of life be like?	Making some lifestyle changes should improve your quality of life. However, hernias can cause pain, limit leisure activities and cause people to take time off work. If you're suffering, then speak to your doctor.	You'll probably start feeling relief within a few days. If you don't then it's time to speak to your doctor and discuss whether you are suitable for an operation.
What else can I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An operation This operation may not be suitable for everyone. An operation is usually for people who have tried other treatments first. <p>Most people with inguinal hernia are free of symptoms by two weeks after the operation. However, about three out of 10 people continue to feel pain and discomfort where the hernia was.</p> <p>Just under one in four people do get complications after the operation. The main long-term health problems are chronic pain, that may last for several years, and 10 in 100 hernias come back.</p>	

Once you have made your decision please complete the below form and return to your GP Practice.



Name:

Date of Birth:

Doctor:

Date completed:

Do you feel SURE about the choice for you? **Yes / No**

Do you know the benefits and risks of each option? **Yes/ No**

Are you clear about which benefits and risks matter most to you?

Yes / No

Do you have enough support and advice to make a choice? **Yes / No**

Which options have you chosen? **Lifestyle changes / Painkillers / Wait and See / Surgery**

How satisfied are you with this decision? **1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10**

