

Femoral hernia repair

What is a femoral hernia?

A femoral hernia causes a lump low down in your groin. It happens at the hole in the wall of your abdomen where the femoral artery and vein pass from your abdomen into your leg.

What does the operation involve?

The operation usually takes about 45 minutes.

It can be performed as Key hole operation or open procedure.

Key hole operation (Laparoscopic): Your surgeon will make a small cut on or near your belly button so he can insert an instrument in your abdominal cavity to inflate it with gas (carbon dioxide). Then he will make two small cuts on your abdomen so he can insert tubes (ports) into your abdomen. Your surgeon will insert surgical instruments through the ports along with a telescope so he can see inside your abdomen and perform the operation.

Your surgeon will return the part of your abdomen that is causing the hernia, and insert a synthetic mesh to cover the weak spot.

Open procedure: Your surgeon will make a cut either directly over the lump or a little higher up and will remove the 'hernial sac'. He will narrow the hole (femoral canal) through which the contents of your abdomen passed, using stitches or a synthetic mesh to allow just enough space for the femoral artery and vein. Your surgeon will close your skin.

What complications can happen?

General complications of any operation

- bleeding
- infection of the surgical site (wound)
- allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication
- blood clot in your leg
- blood clot in your lung
- chest infection

Specific complications of this operation

- developing a collection of blood (haematoma) or fluid (seroma) under your wound
- difficulty passing urine
- injury or narrowing of the femoral vein
- injury to structures that come from your abdomen and are within the hernia

- damage to nerves

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day.

Increase how much you walk around over the first few days.

You should be able to return to work after 2 to 4 weeks, depending on surgery you need and your type of work.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Most people make a full recovery and can return to normal activities. However, the hernia can come back.

Summary

A femoral hernia is a common condition caused by a weakness in your abdominal wall, near the femoral canal. If left untreated, a femoral hernia can cause serious complications.

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