

Pediatric Conditions Hernias

What is an inguinal hernia?

An inguinal hernia occurs when part of an organ, intestines, or tissue protrudes through a hole in the groin. An inguinal hernia will look like a bulge or lump in the groin area.

What is the cause of an inguinal hernia?

Most groin hernias in children develop during fetal development as a weakness in the muscles and tissues that make up the groin. Sometimes, a small hole in the groin that should have closed before birth remains open. Any normal strain from the baby crying, coughing, or bowel movement will cause an organ or tissue to squeeze into this hole. A hernia can be noticed right at birth or may show up months or years later. Hernias are more common in boys.

Is treatment necessary?

Groin hernia should always be treated. A groin hernia will not go away on its own; eventually it will grow larger and may cause pain and problems. Those problems may consist of:

- A loop of the bowel may get trapped inside the hernia causing blockage of the intestine.
- The blood flow going to and from the bowel that is trapped may become blocked and cause that part of the bowel to die, causing stool spillage and severe infections.

Treatment:

Surgery is indicated for hernias because of the risk of the above problems that can be dangerous to your child's health. If the bulge cannot be pushed back (reduced), surgery is done more urgently. In very young infants, it should be done as soon as possible.

Inguinal Hernia

