

# Quick Facts: Hernias

A hernia is defined as a protrusion of an organ or part (such as the intestine) through connective tissue or the abdominal wall in which it is normally enclosed.



An estimated **1 in 4 men** and **1 in 50 women** will require surgery for an inguinal hernia during their lifetime.<sup>1</sup>



## Types of hernias

### Hiatal Hernia

A hiatal hernia occurs when a portion of the stomach protrudes up through the diaphragm into the chest. They are often accompanied by gastroesophageal reflux, which results when the stomach contents leak upwards into the esophagus.<sup>2</sup>

### Ventral Hernia

A ventral hernia is a sac or pouch which forms from the inner lining of the abdomen that pushes abdominal content such as bowel through a hole in the abdominal wall.<sup>3</sup> An incisional hernia is another type of ventral hernia that typically occurs at the site of a previous surgical incision or scar.<sup>4</sup>

### Umbilical Hernia

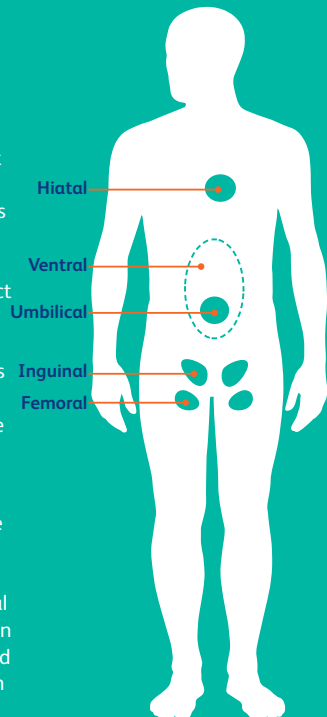
An umbilical hernia is a type of ventral hernia that occurs around the navel, which is common in infants.<sup>5</sup>

### Inguinal Hernia

Inguinal hernias are the most common form of hernias. There are two types – indirect and direct. Indirect inguinal hernias are congenital defects through which abdominal contents protrude into the spermatic cord in males. Direct inguinal hernias are more common in adult males and usually occur due to weakness in the abdominal wall that develops over time, or are due to straining or heavy lifting.<sup>6,7</sup>

### Femoral Hernia

A femoral hernia occurs in the upper part of the thigh near the groin. There is a natural space called the femoral canal where abdominal contents can protrude. Femoral hernias tend to occur more often in women than in men.<sup>8</sup>



1. Beadles CA, Meagher AD, Charles AG. Trends in Emergent Hernia Repair in the United States. *JAMA Surg.* 2015;150(3):194-200. 2. Kahrilas PJ, Kim HC, Pandolfino JC. Approaches to the diagnosis and grading of hiatal hernia. *Best Practice & Research Clinical Gastroenterology.* Volume 22, Issue 4, August 2008, pp 601–616. 3. Lomanto D, Shabbir IA, Cheah WK. Laparoscopic versus open ventral hernia mesh repair: a prospective study. *Surgical Endoscopy and Other Interventional Techniques.* July 2006, Volume 20, Issue 7, pp 1030–1035. 4. Mudge M, Hughes LE. Incisional hernia: A 10 year prospective study of incidence and attitudes. *British Journal of Surgery.* January 1985, Volume 72, Issue 1. 5. Pediatric Umbilical Hernia Repair. *American College of Surgeons Division of Education.* Reviewed April 2013. 6. Inguinal hernia repair: MedlinePlus Medical Encyclopedia. (n.d.). Retrieved November 09, 2016, from <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007406.htm> 7. Inguinal Hernia. Cleveland Clinic, 27 Sept. 2018. [my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/16266-inguinal-hernia](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/16266-inguinal-hernia). 8. Kovachev, L.S. (2014) The Femoral Hernia: Some Necessary Additions. *International Journal of Clinical Medicine.* 5, 752-765