

Hernias Don't Play Favorites — Even Celebrities Get Them



Hernias don't care if you're an action hero, a pop star, or even the Pope—they can happen to anyone. From emergency surgeries to long recovery battles, plenty of famous faces have had to deal with this common condition.

Take **Denise Richards**, for example, who needed surgery to treat not one, not two, but four hernias—two [inguinal](#) and two [femoral](#).¹ She thought the pain and her other symptoms would just go away. They did not and got a lot worse.

Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson might be built like a superhero, but even he had to undergo emergency triple hernia surgery² from injuries he sustained while pushing his body to the limit in the wrestling ring. While we aren't all WWE superstars, we can apply similar constraints when pushing our own bodies to their limits on a daily basis, such as knowing and practicing [proper lifting techniques](#) when moving heavy objects or powerlifting in the gym.³

Jason Momoa—yes, Aquaman himself—had hernia surgery and later joked that he lost his famous abs,⁴ proving that even superhero bodies need time to heal. Which goes to show the importance of following doctor's orders on the [road to recovery](#).

But it's not just action stars feeling the pain. **Aaron Carter** was diagnosed with a [hiatal hernia](#) (when the upper part of your stomach bulges through the large muscle separating your abdomen and chest) at just 19. The condition has affected his eating habits for years.⁵ **Charlie Sheen** was rushed to the hospital due to severe abdominal pain caused by a hernia,⁶ showing how quickly these injuries can escalate from uncomfortable to [emergency situations](#). Should you experience a sudden onset of pain that quickly intensifies or your hernia changes color, goes numb, or causes symptoms like fever, nausea and vomiting, seek medical attention right away.

Athletes, despite their peak physical condition and careful training, aren't off the hook either. [Sports hernias](#) (a painful, soft tissue injury that occurs in the groin area) are particularly treacherous because they can sideline players for months. They're quite common in high-intensity sports, including hockey (**Jamie Benn, Patrice Bergeron, and Jason Zucker**⁷) and football (**Willie Henry, Devonta Freeman, and Geronimo Allison**⁸).

And yes, even **Pope Francis** had hernia surgery,⁹ demonstrating that this condition can affect people of all ages, professions, and activity levels.

While hernias may be common, treatment options have come a long way. Modern [surgical techniques](#), including minimally invasive procedures and [innovations in surgical mesh](#), have revolutionized recovery times and outcomes. If you're feeling discomfort, noticing a bulge, or dealing with digestive issues, be sure to take it seriously. The key is early detection and proper medical care, something these celebrities' stories consistently highlight. Check out our [Hernia Signs and Symptoms Checklist](#) to learn more and visit our [Surgeon Finder](#) to find a provider near you.

1. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/celebrities/2019/12/19/denise-richards-reveals-emergency-medical-procedure-after-4-hernias/2696484001/> 2. <https://www.hola.com/us/celebrities/20210806g16fv0hskc/dwayne-johnson-reveals-reason-defined-abs/> 3. https://aminoapps.com/c/wrestling/page/item/rock-bottom/kmHQ_17jb34r4Z5r3npZgYn0Mj42Nv# 4. <https://people.com/health/jason-momoa-says-he-has-dad-bod-following-hernia-surgery/> 5. <https://www.menshealth.com/entertainment/g23453919/celebrities-chronic-illnesses/> 6. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/report-sheen-suffered-hernia-stomach-flna6c9555127> 7. <https://www.nbcsports.com/nhl/news/sports-hernias-impacting-nhl-players-of-all-ages-including-potential-no-1-pick-nolan-patrick> 8. <https://michiganherniasurgery.com/posts/3-nfl-players-already-affected-by-hernia-injuries-this-season> 9. <https://www.npr.org/2023/06/07/1180687742/pope-francis-surgery-hernia-related>