



Shouldice Hospital

On Your Way

Thank you for choosing Shouldice Hospital, the world leader in hernia repair.

This document provides special instructions to support you through your recovery. We want you to be informed so please review the information provided in each section of this document. Recovery time will vary for each person, however we trust you will have a safe and uneventful recovery.

We welcome your feedback and would ask that you address your comments or suggestions to our Business Development Department at cgiroux@shouldice.com

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR HERNIA:

Your hernia originally pushed its way out through a weakness in the muscle layers of your abdominal wall. Recovery time after surgery depends on the type of hernia and the complexity of your surgery.

To ensure a long-lasting repair with fewer complications, the *Shouldice Technique* of hernia repair involves careful individual integration of the deep muscle layers. A very fine stainless steel thread (a suture) is used to repair the anatomy for a pure tissue repair with extraordinary results. This fine suture will not cause any abnormal reactions or sensations. Furthermore, it will not trigger any metal detectors or interfere with ultrasonic treatments, x-rays or MRIs.

It is important that you participate in your recovery after surgery with proper diet, exercise and instructions given to you by your nurses and doctors.

POST DISCHARGE:

Driving Home

No one should drive a vehicle unless they are fit to do so. Shouldice Hospital cannot accept any responsibility if a patient should choose to drive. Any form of alternate transportation may be used. While many patients do drive themselves home, you may find it more appropriate and comfortable to arrange to be driven. Whether you are driving or being driven, it will not harm your operation. We recommend that if you are traveling a distance, you should stop every two hours or so to walk around and stretch before continuing on your journey.

Follow-up

If you are experiencing any issues with your repair, a follow up visit is recommended. Please make an appointment at our clinic or visit your family doctor.

MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Incision/Care & Bathing - Your incision may be covered by white strips of dressing (Steritrips). Keep these dry in order to minimize the possibility of post-operative issues during the first week of healing. All patients should avoid showers during the first week after surgery unless instructed otherwise by your doctor.

Once you start showering after the first week, simply pat dry the incision after you gently remove the steristrips if they have not already fallen off.

Please do not soak in a bathtub, swimming pool, or hot tub for 2 weeks after your operation and do not apply any lotions or ointments to the incision.

Removal of Incisional Bandages - Depending on the surgery, you may have a bandage. You may remove any abdominal bandages one week after your surgery when you are going to have a shower. Should you notice any incisional discharge from your incision, please let us know immediately.

Swelling and discoloration - Swelling is a common occurrence post-surgery and will subside in a few weeks. If a scab forms, leave it alone. It protects the wound and prevents bacteria from entering. Beneath the skin, a very prominent and very hard ridge will develop around your incision. It will be swollen and irregular and feel almost rock-hard for several months. It will become flat, smooth and soft again but this may take several months. You should not be concerned. In males, the skin of the scrotum and penis is likely to show the most discoloration and swelling, especially in those patients with large hernias, hydroceles, recurrent or bilateral hernias.

Bruising - Superficial bruising is normal for up to 2 to 3 weeks after surgery.

Numbness - Should be expected and is not considered a problem, even though it may feel strange. It is hard to say when normal feeling will return, as it depends on regrowth of the fine nerve fibers in the skin.

Soreness and stiffness - Each patient recovers differently and there may be intermittent discomfort for several weeks and up to some months after surgery.

Pain - You may feel burning, tingling, intermittent sharp pains or other unusual sensations around the incision for many weeks after your operation. These sensations are part of the healing process and will gradually disappear after several months. The discomfort is typically handled with over-the-counter pain killers such as Tylenol or Advil. Applying cold packs to the operative area for 15 minutes three times per day will help to relieve muscle pain. Do not put an ice pack directly on the skin.

Infection - Notify us if you develop a fever, if the incision becomes red, more swollen, painful and/or if there is discharge from the incision. These could be signs that there is an infection.

Seek medical attention if you experience any of the following:

- Active bleeding and/or wound separation that you cannot control with direct pressure
- Pain that you cannot control with your pain medication
- Signs of infection e.g. wound drainage, fever, chills
- Unable to keep down fluids

If you suspect that your hernia repair has become an emergency in any way, contact your local emergency services. Consult Shouldice Hospital as soon as possible.

Exercise - The purpose of the Shouldice Method is to have patients return to a normal lifestyle quickly, without complication and with a lifelong repair. Non-strenuous activities such as walking, climbing stairs, bending and stretching are encouraged immediately after surgery.

A lack of exercise, extended sitting and bed rest will lengthen post-operative stiffness and discomfort. Sudden movements, coughing and sneezing, may cause pain during the early stages of recovery. Do not be alarmed as your repair will not be damaged. Increase your work and play activities progressively.

We recommend that you continue with our exercise programs at home. Please use these links to access them:

Exercise Video Day 1

<https://youtu.be/djfTiZBrdBU>

Exercise video day 2

<https://youtu.be/gxk-sxneLNq>

Exercise Program Day 3

<https://youtu.be/NzmHzrs-jQw>

Sports - Start gradually after 2-4 weeks or whenever it is comfortable. Increase duration and effort at your own pace and comfort level.

Sexual Activity - As soon as there is no distracting discomfort you may resume normal sexual activity.

Diet - Eat a normal diet, add extra fruit, fibre and fluids to your diet. Foods high in protein, Vitamin C, Zinc, Iron, and Calcium are important for wound healing.

Constipation - Bowel movements are commonly delayed after surgery. You should return to normal within 3-5 days. Eating extra fruit, fibre and drinking fluids will help to avoid constipation.

Return to work - It is safe to resume office work or any light occupation on the day of discharge. If your work is likely to involve heavy lifting or straining, you may wish to stay off work a little longer - possibly up to 3 or 4 weeks from the date of the operation. In the absence of complications, we do not certify patients being off work for longer than 4 weeks. Visit the Accounts office upon discharge for your documentation.