

## Inguinal Hernia

Let's talk  
about it!

The doctor has said that you have an inguinal hernia.

So, read this leaflet to find out what you can do. Then talk about it more with your doctor.

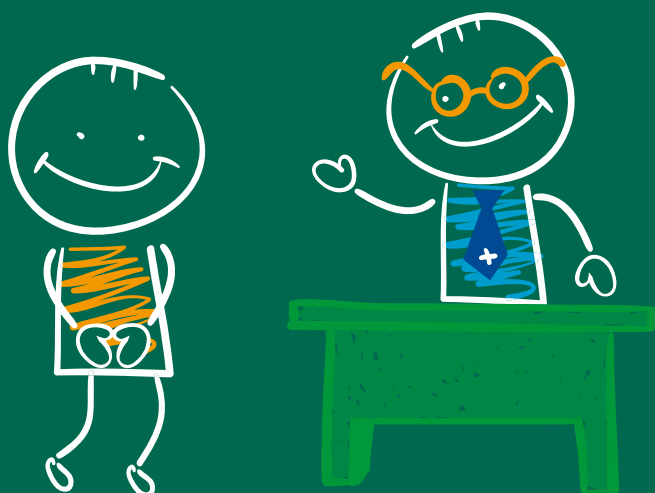
With an inguinal hernia, you have two main choices. They are to make lifestyle changes or take painkillers.

An operation is not suitable for everyone, so may not be an option for you. Your doctor will talk about it with you.

Think about what you need, what you enjoy doing and how you live.

Turn over to find out more.

You can also use the **Patient Decision Aid** to work out what's best for you.  
Go to: [sdm.rightcare.nhs.uk/pda](http://sdm.rightcare.nhs.uk/pda)



# What to talk about with your doctor

Below are some questions you might want to ask about the different treatments you can try.

Questions	Lifestyle and weight loss	Painkillers
<b>What is the treatment?</b>	<p>You will probably need to make lifestyle changes like avoiding heavy lifting.</p> <p>It could also mean wearing a special belt called a 'truss'. You will need to watch for changes to the hernia.</p>	<p>You can support lifestyle changes by also taking painkillers like ibuprofen or paracetamol. They help some people with their pain.</p>
<b>What will happen to my symptoms?</b>	<p>Symptoms don't go away completely, and they might get worse. But if this happens you may want to take painkillers.</p>	<p>As you take painkillers you should be able to do more and this can help reduce pain further.</p>
<b>Are there any risks?</b>	<p>Sometimes even if you make lifestyle changes the hernia may get bigger, more uncomfortable or stuck (irreducible) in the groin or scrotum.</p> <p>If this happens you may need an emergency operation to prevent serious problems like bowel obstruction.</p>	<p>Side effects are rare but as with any medicine there may be some.</p> <p>For example anti-inflammatories like ibuprofen can increase your risk of stomach bleeding.</p>
<b>What will my quality of life be like?</b>	<p>Making some lifestyle changes should improve your quality of life.</p> <p>However, hernias can cause pain, limit leisure activities and cause people to take time off work. If you're suffering, then speak to your doctor.</p>	<p>You'll probably start feeling relief within a few days. If you don't then it's time to speak to your doctor and discuss whether you are suitable for an operation.</p>
<b>What else can I do?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>An operation</b>  <b>This operation may not be suitable for everyone. An operation is usually for people who have tried other treatments first.</b> </li> </ul> <p>Most people with inguinal hernia are free of symptoms by two weeks after the operation. However, about three out of 10 people continue to feel pain and discomfort where the hernia was.</p> <p>Just under one in four people do get complications after the operation. The main long-term health problems are chronic pain, that may last for several years, and 10 in 100 hernias come back.</p>	

To take a look at the Patient Decision Aids go to [sdm.rightcare.nhs.uk/pda](https://sdm.rightcare.nhs.uk/pda)