

Hernia Lifestyle Changes^{1,2}

Below are some general recommendations for lifestyle changes following hernia repair surgery. Be sure to ask your doctor about any changes you should make for your own individual condition. This information is for educational purposes only. Individual results may vary.

Be Smart About Manual Labor

- Proper manual handling techniques when lifting or moving a heavy object can help prevent future hernias.
- Avoid twisting or stooping, and keep your head up when lifting something.
- Discuss adjustments to your daily routine with your healthcare provider.

Quit Smoking

- Smoking negatively affects your body's ability to heal and can increase your risk of hernia infection.
- Smoking damages your lungs, weakens your muscles and connective tissue, and inhibits cell growth, which can make you susceptible to hernias.

Incorporate a Well-Rounded Diet

- Maintaining a healthy weight is important for many reasons, including to help prevent another hernia.
- Diets low in fat and high in fiber can help reduce constipation, which can potentially cause unnecessary strain, and may lead to a hernia.

Exercise With Intent

- Warm up before a workout and cooldown after.
- Resume/begin working out with low-intensity exercises and gradually progress through a fitness routine; stop if you feel any pain.
- Avoid vigorous exercise, such as weightlifting, running, or biking until your doctor approves.



Labor

Returning to work following surgery will vary based on the size and type of hernia. Speak with your healthcare provider to determine when you can return to work and if any adjustments are needed to your work routine during recovery. Proper manual handling techniques when lifting or moving a heavy object can help prevent future hernias. Avoid twisting or stooping, and keep your head up when lifting something.³



Smoking

Smoking can negatively affect your body's ability to heal. Smoking also increases your risk of hernia infection. Ask your doctor if you should give up smoking before or after your surgery and, if so, for how long.⁴



Diet and exercise

There are no specific dietary restrictions after surgery, but maintaining a healthy weight is essential. Diets low in fat and high in fiber are recommended to help prevent constipation, which can potentially cause unnecessary strain, and may lead to a hernia. Taking short walks can help you maintain a healthy weight. Avoid vigorous exercise, such as weightlifting or biking until your doctor approves it.⁵

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