

## Hernia prevention

### Healthy habits and basic precautions can save you a lot of pain later.

Hernias are potentially serious conditions that are preventable with caution and attention to general wellness.

A hernia occurs when an organ pushes through an opening in the muscle or tissue that holds it in place. For example, in the most common type of hernia, the intestines may break through a weakened area in the abdominal wall.

Most often caused by a combination of muscle weakness and strain, a hernia can develop quickly or over a long period of time. They are most common in the abdomen, but can also appear in the upper thigh, belly button, and groin areas.

A hernia sometimes begins as a minor protrusion, but also has the potential to become more serious. While most hernias are not life-threatening, they don't go away on their own. Sometimes, they can require surgery to prevent potentially dangerous complications.<sup>1</sup>

Ultimately, basic healthy habits like regular exercise and proper nutrition can be very effective in warding off hernias. In addition, there are many ways you can reduce your overall chances of getting a hernia,<sup>2</sup> including:

- Warm up properly before athletic activity and exercise.
- Use good form and caution whenever lifting anything that is heavy.

- Strengthen your abdominal muscles with targeted strength exercises, particularly in the abdominal and core regions.
- Rest properly after vigorous exercise, particularly weightlifting.
- Quit smoking if possible, as coughing can contribute to hernia development.
- Eat a high-fiber diet to avoid constipation.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Incorporate some stretching and flexibility exercises into your exercise routine.

As part of your Best Doctors benefits, a comprehensive expert review of your medical case gives you a clear, simple report that either confirms your diagnosis and treatment plan or recommends a change. Regardless of whether you have a hernia or hernia-like symptoms, Best Doctors is your reliable source of information to eliminate uncertainty and get additional expert guidance on your health and wellness.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.healthline.com/health/hernia>

<sup>2</sup><http://stretchcoach.com/articles/hernia>

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