



Yelm Family Medicine Patient Newsletter

Committed to your health and our community

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June is Hernia Awareness Month

Do you or someone you know suffer from a hernia? Are you aware of the symptoms and telltale signs of this painful and potentially dangerous condition? More importantly, do you know what you can do to treat them if they arise? June is Hernia Awareness Month, and brushing up on hernia basics is an important part of senior care. This summer, don't let a hernia keep you on the couch and out of the sunshine.

What is a hernia?

A hernia is an uncomfortable condition in which an organ or bit of tissue actually slips through a weakness or tear and protrudes unnaturally from the body. Though not universally so, most

Hernias come about as a result of a weakened abdominal wall, according to the Hernia Resource Center. This can be the result of a birth defect, but is also common as people age due to factors such as sickness, surgery, childbirth or obesity. While not immediately dangerous on its own, an untreated hernia can lead to severe medical complications requiring emergency surgery.

Fortunately, hernias are not overly difficult to detect. Oftentimes, they are visibly noticeable as a protrusion from the abdomen, possibly even growing over time. Soreness and discomfort are also very common symptoms.

However, one type of hernia

Be sure to do something extra special for the father in your life.

Here are some ideas:

Free Ways to Celebrate Father's Day

- Take dad out to enjoy his hobby.
- Take a walk (or a drive) through history.
- Have your kids fill out a funny questionnaire.
- Go for a walk, run, or drive.
- Hold a surprise party or pitch-in dinner.
- Organize old photos that share a special memory.



known as a hiatal hernia does not always present noticeable symptoms. Many times, adults with this type of hernia display no visible symptoms save for severe heartburn and vomiting - if these symptoms affect you, having your doctor check you for a hernia is a good idea.

Treating hernias

Hernias do not repair themselves or go away if left untreated.

Despite the fact that, according to the HRC, 5 million Americans suffer from hernias, only around 275,000 of them seek treatment.

The main reason for this is the primary hernia treatment is reparative surgery. Fortunately, technology has advanced to such a point that many hernia repair surgeries are noninvasive, and some can even be performed as outpatient procedures in a single afternoon.

A study from the University Of Genoa School, Of Medicine found that a procedure called mesh hernia repair was the safest and most effective treatment in senior patients. Such a procedure can be performed with a local anesthetic,

and none of the subjects in the study experienced any major complications as a result of the operation. Electing to receive surgery to repair a hernia may seem frightening, but it is a very safe procedure, and studies have not found any increased risk of complication in older patients.



Common symptoms of hernias

The first sign of a hernia most people will notice is a bulge or lump in the area where the hernia is taking place. In some cases, there are no symptoms of a hernia.

Symptoms often are a result of inguinal or hiatal hernia.

Symptoms of inguinal hernia include:

- Pain in the affected area, especially when bending over, coughing or lifting
- Burning, gurgling or aching in the area of the hernia bulge
- Weakness, pressure or a feeling of heaviness in the abdomen

Symptoms of a hiatal hernia include:

- Chest pain
- Difficulty swallowing
- Acid reflux

