



The Aberdeen  
Clinic

# PATIENT INFORMATION

## Anaesthetics for Hernia Surgery

## **Local Anaesthesia**

A local anaesthetic drug blocks the passage of painful stimuli along the nerves that carry these sensations to the brain. Accordingly, with a local anaesthetic you can be awake but have no sensation of pain at the operating site. Furthermore, the effect of the anaesthetic lasts for some time after the operating and reduces the need to take pain killers.

### **Preparation for local anaesthetic**

There is no specific preparation and no need to fast. It is important to let your surgeon know about any medications you are taking and also any allergies you have.

### **Procedure**

The local anaesthetic agent is injected directly into the area to be operated on, about five minutes before the start of the operation. The surgeon will also inject further anaesthetic as the operation progresses. In all cases the treated area will rapidly become numb, but you may still be aware of movement in and around the anaesthetised area.

As you will be awake during the operation the surgeon and nurses are able to speak with you and ensure that you are comfortable throughout. Some patients like to bring their own choice of music to listen to during the procedure.

### **After Care**

One of the greatest advantages of a local anaesthetic is that the area anaesthetised remains numb after the operation. How long depends upon the specific drug used and your surgeon will explain this to you. It is important that you are given oral painkillers to take (as required) as feeling starts to return and the anaesthetic wears off.

## **General Anaesthesia**

A general anaesthetic involves giving drugs to ensure that you are asleep during the repair of your hernia.

### **Preparation for general anaesthetic**

It is essential that the surgeon and anaesthetist are aware of your previous medical history as this may have a bearing on how the anaesthetic is delivered.

In particular they will want to know:

- If you are on any medications – if so, what are they and how often you take them.
- If you have had any anaesthetics before and have experienced any adverse reactions.
- If you have any known allergies.
- If have any dental crowns, or loose teeth.
- If you have had a recent cough, cold or sore throat. In this case it may be advisable to postpone your operation until you are fully recovered.

### **Fasting**

It is important that your stomach is empty prior to any anaesthetic and you will be asked to fast for 6 hours before the operation. The exception may be if you have to take important medications with a sip of water – however the anaesthetist will discuss this with you.