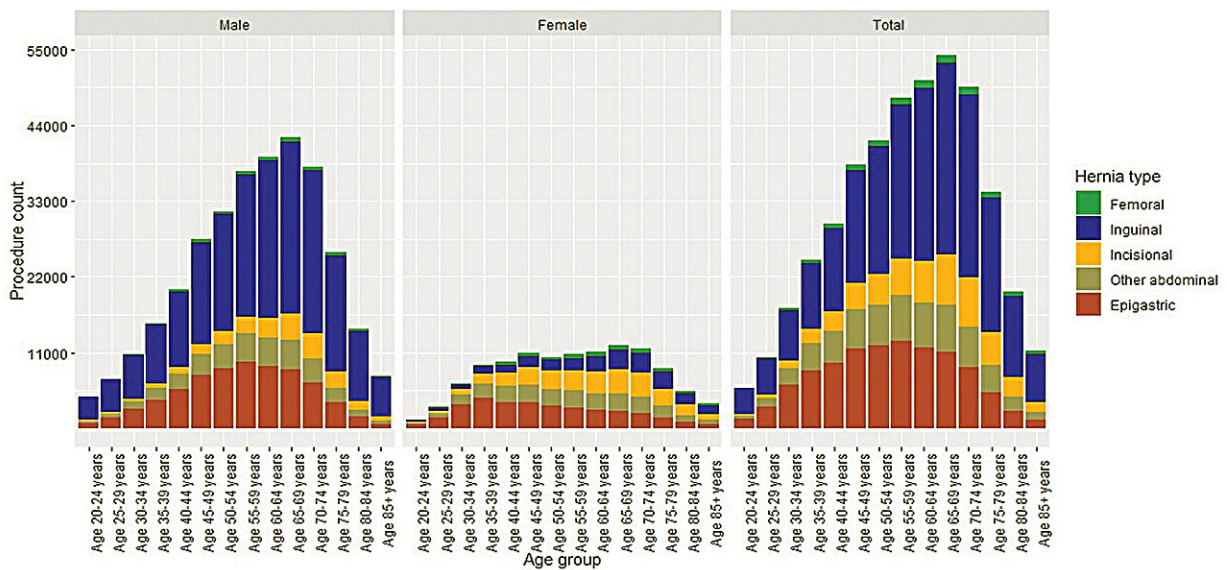


In Australia, 90,000 have hernia repair surgery each year, with older men at highest risk

August 7 2024, by Candy Gibson



Number of hernia repair procedures by age group and by sex from FY2016–17 to FY2020–21. Credit: *Critical Public Health* (2024). DOI: 10.1080/09581596.2024.2351981

A new Australian study reveals who is most at risk of having hernia repair surgery, one of the most common medical conditions and surgical operations performed in hospitals worldwide.

Half of the 435,826 hernia repair procedures in adults undertaken in Australia between 2017 and 2021 were for inguinal (groin) [hernias](#), with men accounting for 89.6% of the operations.

Using data from the Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (AIHW), University of South Australia researchers have crunched the numbers for five different types of hernia operations, identifying what age groups and genders are at highest risk.

People aged between 60 and 64 years, particularly men, are at most risk overall, but women are more prone to repairs of femoral hernias in the upper part of the thigh, and incisional hernias, a common side effect of abdominal surgery.

When it comes to surgery for epigastric and other abdominal hernias across all [age groups](#), men are at much higher risk, although women aged 20–39 years are more likely than men in their age group to have an epigastric hernia operation (between the sternum and [belly button](#)).

The findings have been [published](#) in the *Critical Public Health* journal.

UniSA researcher and co-author Dr. Marianne Gillam says despite high annual rates of [surgery](#) worldwide, few studies have examined the epidemiology of various types of hernia repairs on a large scale.

"Approximately 20 million hernia repair procedures are carried out globally each year, including about 90,000 in Australia," Dr. Gillam says.

Researchers say that men are more susceptible to hernias due to higher rates of smoking, strenuous exercise, bladder issues, chronic airway disorders, hypertension, and heart disease.

"It's important we are aware of those patients who have higher risks of

hernia repair so we can develop health campaigns and policies to improve their quality of life and lower their risks of developing hernias."

More information: Thi Nga Le et al, Hernia repair prevalence by age and gender among the Australian adult population from 2017 to 2021, *Critical Public Health* (2024). [DOI: 10.1080/09581596.2024.2351981](https://doi.org/10.1080/09581596.2024.2351981)

Provided by University of South Australia

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