

## **Laparoscopic Hernia Repair by Dr Philip Corvo – previously published by Stamford Hospital, edited and updated by Dr Corvo**

The last thing a martial arts competitor needs is a hernia. "I had noticed the bulge for a while, but it hadn't really bothered me until recently," said the 26-year old male patient. "I began to feel a tremendous strain in my abdomen during my work-outs. It actually felt like my intestines were trying to come out!" The patient's primary care physician referred him to Dr. Philip R. Corvo, a general and critical care surgeon at Stamford Hospital, who determined that the patient had an inguinal hernia and recommended total extraperitoneal (TEP) hernioplasty. One month after the surgery, the patient won second place in a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu martial arts tournament.

"The successful repair of inguinal hernia has been the measure of surgical techniques for over 130 years," said Dr. Timothy S. Hall, Chairman of the Department of Surgery. "Each new procedure has reflected the advances in the field of surgery. Total extraperitoneal hernia repair applies the most modern minimally invasive techniques to create a tensionfree repair with minimal discomfort, rapid recovery and excellent long term results."

Similar to a traditional hernia repair, TEP hernia surgery is also an outpatient procedure. "Under general anesthesia, we make a half-inch incision under the belly button and two quarter-inch incisions below that one," explained Dr. Corvo. "We create a space between the posterior rectus sheath (the "six pack muscles and core") and the peritoneum. After we create that space, we take a specially designed pre-formed mesh and slide it into place. After time, the patient's body grows into the mesh, essentially creating a brand new layer." The entire procedure takes less than one hour, and most people are discharged within two to three hours.

Post-surgery, less discomfort has been reported than with the traditional hernia repair. "Most people only need ice and Tylenol for the postoperative soreness," said Dr. Corvo. "About a third of the people don't even fill the prescriptions that I give them."

"The biggest advantage of preperitoneal repair is that we technically don't cut any muscle, so most people can usually get back to their normal activities after one week, which is sooner than with any other type of hernia repair," said Dr. Corvo. "There is some literature that suggests this repair causes less discomfort than the traditional repair, and that it is stronger."

Dr. Corvo's patient derived all of the advantages of the TEP surgery, and perhaps more. "The surgery went perfectly," said Dr. Corvo. "I told him he could do anything he wanted except for his martial arts workouts until I checked him in the office."

"I was amazed at how fast I was able to recover," said the patient. "Within two weeks of the surgery I was back to actively training in martial arts. One month later I competed in a grappling tournament and narrowly missed first place!"

"I feel like I can do more now than I could do before the surgery," he exclaimed. "If anything, I'm able to exert myself more than I had been able to before."