

Eligibility criteria for anterior abdominal hernia repair (excluding femoral) – effective from 1 April 2026

Southern Cross will reimburse the cost of anterior abdominal hernia repair for members aged 16 or over when criteria **1, 2 and 3** below are met.

1. The member has presurgical documented objective signs and moderate to severe symptoms of a hernia, confirmed by physical examination, or radiological or photographic evidence.
2. For epigastric, umbilical or spigelian hernias (only), imaging is required to confirm true hernia and not rectus diaphragmatica.
3. For incisional hernia (only), evidence to show that an ACC treatment injury claim has been lodged must be retained.

Supporting documentation must be retained for audit purposes, demonstrating compliance with the above criteria and, where applicable, providing radiological or photographic evidence.

Examples of eligible moderate to severe symptoms:

- Member has skin ulceration directly related to and overlying the hernia.
- Member has persistent and escalating pain at the hernia site impacting activities of daily living including work and/or resting pain /pain during sleep.
- Member has experienced pain for at least four weeks requiring regular pain relief medication.

The cost of anterior abdominal hernia repair will **not** be reimbursed in the following circumstance:

- For the repair of a hernia resulting from pregnancy or childbirth.
- For hernia repair elected due to cosmetic or aesthetic reasons.
- For incidental hernia repair when no pre-operative signs and symptoms were documented.
- For hernia repair performed concurrently with bariatric surgery.

Please also ensure you are familiar with all **policy exclusions**, including:

- Acute care
- Congenital conditions
- Cosmetic treatment/procedures
- Health screening
- Treatment of any condition not detrimental to health
- Unapproved healthcare services.

Refer to the relevant policy document for specific conditions and exceptions that apply to these exclusions.