Pediatric umbilical hernia

What is an umbilical hernia?
A hernia occurs when tissue bulges out of its normal place in the body. An umbilical hernia happens when there is an incomplete closure of the muscle in the umbilicus (belly button) and a loop of bowel protrudes through the hole.

The hernia appears as a bulge at the belly button that stretches the skin. The bulge becomes more prominent when the infant/child cries or strains. The bulge will spontaneously reduce when the infant/child calms.

An umbilical hernia is the only type of hernia that can close on its own without surgical correction. For this reason, surgical correction typically is not performed until your infant/child is between 2 and 4 years old.

What to expect at your appointment:
Your child will be seen and evaluated in our Pediatric Surgery clinic by one of our pediatric surgeons and/or the physician assistant (PA).

If surgical correction is required, a date will be chosen for the procedure. The surgery usually is an outpatient procedure; you will arrive at the hospital on the morning of surgery and return home the same day.

What tests are required?
There is no test required for diagnosis. The diagnosis is made by physical examination.

Pediatric Surgery team:
Kara Cole, PA-C
John Draus, Jr, MD
Joseph Iocono, MD
Andrew Pulito, MD
Sean Skinner, MD

Contact information:
Pediatric Surgery office/clinic: 859-323-5625
Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
After hours, please call 859-323-5321 and ask for the on-call Pediatric Surgery resident