

41 Surgical treatment

A The operating theatre

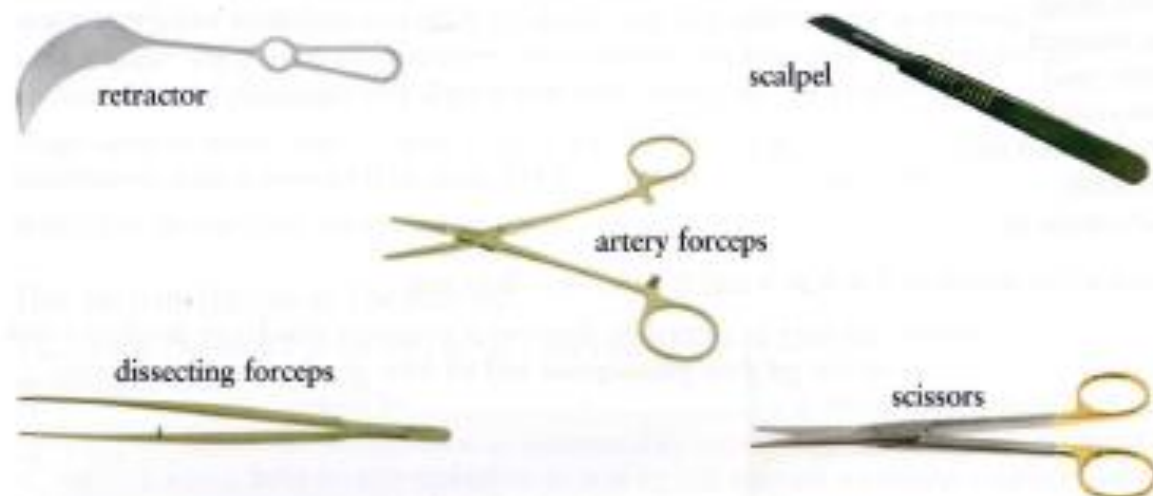
Surgery is carried out in an operating theatre. Great care is taken to make sure that operations take place in **sterile conditions** – free from microorganisms. The surgeon and his or her assistant wash or scrub up, and put on surgical gowns, masks, and gloves. The patient's skin is prepared by disinfecting it with an antiseptic solution. This is known as **prepping** (preparing) the patient. They are then covered with sterile drapes, so that only the area of the operation is exposed.



glove mask gown

B Instruments

The most basic surgical instruments are shown in the picture.



C The operation

The operation begins when the surgeon makes an **incision** or cut. Control of bleeding is very important. A **swab** is a pad of cotton or other material used to soak up blood from the operation site. A **sucker** is a mechanical device which **aspirates** – sucks up – blood. Bleeding vessels are tied with **ligatures** or sealed by an electric current (**diathermy**).

Drains may be inserted to carry away fluid which might act as a culture medium for bacteria. Various methods are used to close the wound, for example **sutures** (also known as **stitches**), or **staples**. Finally, the wound is covered with a **dressing**.

D An operation report

This patient had an indirect right inguinal hernia.

Anaesthesia: Spinal anaesthetic with local anaesthetic infiltration

Incision: Right inguinal

Procedure: The external oblique aponeurosis was **divided** and the spermatic cord **mobilized**. The hernial sac was identified and separated from the spermatic cord. The hernial sac was then mobilized back to its neck where it was **transfixed** and the **redundant tissue excised**. The fascia at the neck of the spermatic cord was divided, carefully **preserving** the vessels, the genital branch of the nerve and the vas deferens. Thereafter the posterior wall of the inguinal canal was **repaired** in two layers.

Closure: The wound was **closed in layers** with Dexon suture material to the external oblique aponeurosis and staples to the skin.