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Background – Aim: Inguinal hernia repair is among the most common surgical operations worldwide with over 20 million performed yearly. During the COVID-19 pandemic most elective hernia repairs were canceled, leading to potentially detrimental effects on the patients suffering from them. The aim of this study was to assess the impact of the pandemic on inguinal hernias and elucidate its consequences.

Material & Methods: Patients that underwent inguinal hernia repair at General Hospital of Amfissa from March 2018 to March 2022 were included in this study. Patients were divided into two groups before (Group A) and after (Group B) March 2020, the date on which the first lockdown was implemented in Greece.

Results: Overall, 407 patients (382 males & 25 females) with a mean age of 69 (24–93) were included in this study. A 27.5% decrease in total surgeries was found during the Group B (236 vs 171 patients), but emergency surgeries significantly increased (17.3% vs 43.9%). Furthermore, there was a statistically significant increase in strangulated cases (15.3% vs 40.4%) and cases warranting a bowel resection (13.6% vs 39.2%). Mean length of hospital stay also significantly increased over Group B period (1.69 vs 3.02 days).

Conclusions: Policies leading to cancelation of elective surgeries and reallocation of healthcare facilities in order to confront the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a significant delay in the management of inguinal hernias. Thus, a steep increase in emergency cases was observed, as a greater part of these hernias are being left untreated and subsequently strangulated.

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P-041 THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON ELECTIVE INGUINAL HERNIA REPAIR: A SINGLE-CENTER EXPERIENCE

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