

---

## Highlights 2022

### **Opening of practice location Liestal**

The year 2022 started for ZweiChirurgen with the opening of our second practice location in the historic „Stedtli“ in Liestal. This means that we can now offer our patients and referring colleagues in Baselland treatment close to home.

### **Certified competence in hernia surgery**

ZweiChirurgen was certified by the DGAV (German Society for general and visceral surgery) as a «Competence Center Hernia Surgery» in November 2022. This certification is only awarded to centers or clinics that have maintained a demonstrably high quality of treatment in hernia surgery over a long period of time. This includes, for example, exceptionally low complication rates, low recurrence rates and high patient satisfaction. In addition, comprehensive requirements in research as well as continuing education and training must be met. This makes ZweiChirurgen one of only seven «Competence Centers for Hernia Surgery» in Switzerland and the only certified hernia center in Basel.

### **European specialist title for hernia surgery**

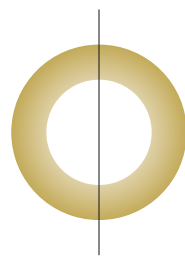
Prof. Dr. Kirchhoff and PD Dr. Hoffmann already hold the European Specialist Title for Hernia Surgery since 2021. Debora Nowakowski, MD, has now also been awarded with the European Specialist Title for Hernia Surgery (F.E.B.S. Abdominal Wall Surgery) in 2022 after passing the oral and practical examinations at the annual congress of the European Hernia Society (EHS) in Manchester (UK). We sincerely congratulate Dr. Nowakowski on this great success! This further underlines the importance of hernia surgery at ZweiChirurgen and hernia patients can expect to be treated by absolute experts.

### **Robotic Surgery**

In 2022, ZweiChirurgen were able to start the program for robot-assisted minimally invasive hernia surgery at the Merian Iselin Clinic in Basel. Robotic surgery is a consistent further development of conventional minimally invasive surgery. The surgeon no longer performs the operation standing at the operating table but sitting at a console, while the robot is docked to the patient's table and holds the instruments. The surgeon then uses the console to control the robot's arms and instruments. The advantages of this technique include better ergonomics for the surgeons, a more detailed 3D image through the robotic camera, and finer control of the surgical instruments with more degrees of freedom in instrument mobility. This makes it possible to perform even complex hernia operations in a minimally invasive way and reduces the physical strain on the surgeons, which ultimately benefits the patients.

### **Increase in staff**

Due to the large increase in patient numbers, it was also necessary to increase the staff at ZweiChirurgen in 2022. We were therefore very happy to welcome Ms. Alina Horvath to our team as an MPA (Medical Practice Nurse) in training as of November 2022.



---

## Treatment figures 2022

### Treatments in the practice

In 2022, we treated a total of 6764 patients at the Basel and Liestal practice locations. This represents an increase of 33% compared to the previous year. Among them were 297 emergency consultations.

### Operations

A total of 1023 surgeries were performed by ZweiChirurgen in 2022, representing a 23% increase in the number of surgeries compared to the previous year. Of these, 475 were inpatient operations at the Merian-Iselin Clinic (of which 448 were hernia operations) and 548 were outpatient operations (mainly proctological operations) in our practice operating room in Basel.

---

## Treatment quality and operations 2021

### Quality-assured hernia surgery in our competence center

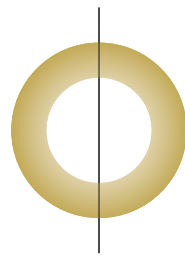
- All patients undergoing hernia surgery are systematically recorded in the Herniamed registry to record operation details and the quality of care. Beginning in November 2018, 1478 patients with hernias have been operated on by ZweiChirurgen to date, with a steady increase in the number of operations per year. In total, 448 patients underwent hernia surgery through us in 2022. This mainly includes operations for inguinal hernia (54%), umbilical hernias (24%) and incisional hernias (9%). The average hospital stay was two days. The quality of treatment was maintained at a very high level: The overall hernia recurrence rate is 0% for inguinal hernias and 0.1% for incisional hernias, which is extremely low. The percentage of our patients who suffered from chronic groin pain one year after inguinal hernia repair was 0.9% (pain at rest) and 3.1% (pain on exertion). For comparison, average pain rates of 6-8% are reported in the literature. Wound complications such as bruising or fluid retention occurred in 1.9% of cases, which is also a good result.

### Treatment of chronic groin pain

Chronic groin pain after inguinal hernia surgery is among the most important complications. In non-specialist surgeons, rates of 6-10% are described in the literature, which can significantly reduce the quality of life in many cases. Although the rate of pain is significantly lower in our patient population, we have treated many patients with this problem who were referred to us by primary care physicians or other surgeons. In 2022, we treated 65 patients with this problem, again almost doubling the number of cases compared to the previous year. The treatment of this problem needs a competent and interdisciplinary expertise. In 25 cases an operation (surgical nerve resection, partial mesh removal) was necessary, in the other cases the pain could be successfully treated by local measures (infiltrations, radio frequency ablation).

### Treatment of rectus diastasis

The proportion of patients with symptomatic rectus diastasis also continued to increase. Here we were able to treat a total of 25 patients surgically, whereby in about half of the patients the operations were performed together with Dr. Rik Osinga (Plastic Surgery) in order to achieve a satisfactory cosmetic result too.



---

### Treatment of the «sportsman's groin»

Another important patient collective are patients with a so-called «sportsman's groin». These patients complain of pain in the groin area during sports. Here, too, an interdisciplinary clarification is required, which we perform together with sports orthopedists and physiotherapists. In some cases, surgical stabilization of the inguinal canal is necessary; a total of 15 patients were treated surgically at our center in 2022. Another 20 patients could be treated well conservatively.

---

## CONGRESSES AND SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS 2022

ZweiChirurgen surgeons were again sought-after speakers and experts at numerous national and international congresses in 2022. In addition, ZweiChirurgen's scientific publications in 2022 were cited 523 times in other articles.

In March 2022, PD Dr. med. Hoffmann was able to share his experience in the treatment of rectus diastasis in front of approximately 1000 participants at an **international hernia conference (International Hernia Symposium, IHS) in Athens**, Greece.

In April 2022 PD Dr. med. Hoffmann was again active at the **Austrian Hernia Days in Salzburg** and exchanged with colleagues especially on the topic of robotics in hernia surgery.

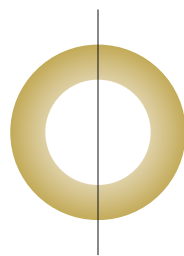
In May 2022, Prof. Dr. Philipp Kirchhoff was invited as an expert at the **«Trilateral Meeting of Minimally Invasive Surgery» in Vienna** (Austria). Here he was able to update the participants on the topic of minimally invasive care of abdominal wall hernias.

Also in May 2022, the whole ZweiChirurgen team was active at the annual congress of the **Swiss Society of Surgery (SGC) in Bern**. Together with the Swiss Association for Hernia Surgery (SAHC), an entire session on hernia surgery was organized, which was met with very great interest.

After the summer break, the **«Swiss Hernia Days»** were hosted by ZweiChirurgen for the 5th time in September 2022. Prof. Dr. Kirchhoff and PD Dr. Hoffmann again succeeded in inviting numerous high-ranking experts to Basel. 300 participants from Switzerland and all over Europe and the rest of the world gathered in Basel to exchange views on trends and current developments in hernia surgery in an innovative and interactive atmosphere.

In September 2022, PD Dr. Hoffmann again participated as an instructor and speaker at the traditional **«Davos Course»**. As every year, junior surgeons were trained in hernia surgery with lectures, case discussions and practical exercises on hernia models.

In October 2022, PD Dr. Hoffmann was invited as an expert at the **Romanian Hernia Days in Bucharest**. For two days, trends and innovations in hernia surgery were discussed with colleagues from Romania and numerous Eastern European countries.



---

In October 2022, Dr. Debora Nowakowski and PD Dr. Henry Hoffmann were active speakers and experts at the annual congress of the **European Hernia Society (EHS) in Manchester**. Around 1500 participants from all over Europe and other continents were able to discuss current developments in hernia surgery. On the occasion of the congress, the examinations for obtaining the European specialist title for hernia surgery (F.E.B.S. Abdominal Wall Surgery) are also held, in which PD Dr. Hoffmann was again active as an examiner for numerous candidates.

In November 2022, Prof. Dr. Philipp Kirchhoff was active as a speaker at the **Regional Hernia Forum at the Cantonal Hospital Liestal** and was able to present current developments in the minimally invasive treatment of abdominal wall hernias.

PD Dr. Hoffmann and Dr. med. Nowakowski were invited as experts to the annual congress of the **Asia-Pacific-Hernia-Society (APHS) in Saigon** (Vietnam) in November 2022. Together with 1000 participants mainly from Asia and Australia, ZweiChirurgen gave lectures on rectus diastasis, chronic postoperative inguinal pain and new techniques in hernia surgery.

---

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Chronic postoperative inguinal pain (CPIP – an underestimated problem in hernia surgery).  
**Hoffmann H, Kirchhoff P, Nowakowski D.** Swiss Knife 2022 (3)
- Chemical abdominal wall release using botulinum toxin A: A personal view.  
**Hoffmann H, Kirchhoff P, Nowakowski D.** Int J Abd Wall Hernia Surg. 2022