

Ball Basics

A young person's guide to
testicular cancer

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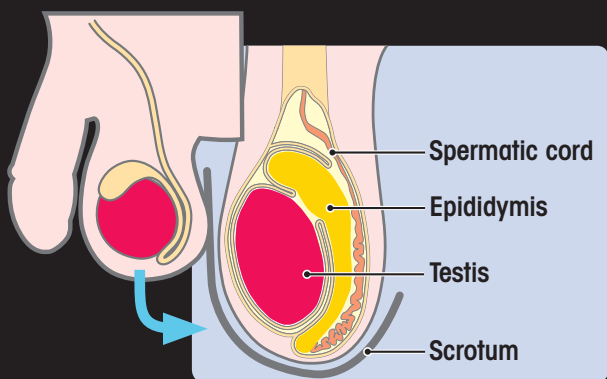
ORCHID
FIGHTING MALE CANCER

Did you know?

The following conditions may often have similar symptoms to testicular cancer and may cause worry.

Epididymo-orchitis

This is inflammation of the epididymis and/or testis usually due to infection. It is particularly common in young males aged 15-30 and may occur as a result of a urinary infection or sexually transmitted disease. Testicles will feel painful and swollen and can take a few weeks to fully settle and will usually require a two week course of strong antibiotics.



Epididymitis: means inflammation of the epididymis

Orchitis: means inflammation of the testis

Varicocele

This is a collection of dilated veins in the scrotum. It often affects men between the ages of 15-25 and can affect one or both testicles. Normally the veins in the spermatic cord are undetectable. If they become distended they can be felt and have been described medically as feeling like a bag of worms. Varicoceles can vary in size and are usually not painful but may cause a 'dragging' sensation. They can be surgically or medically treated if they are causing a lot of pain.

Hydrocele

The testis is surrounded by a protective tissue sac which produces a lubricating fluid to allow the testicles to move freely. Excess fluid usually drains into the veins in the scrotum. However, if this drainage route has been affected by infection or trauma, fluid may accumulate and is called a hydrocele. A hydrocele will often feel like a small fluid filled balloon and may cause a chronic ache or discomfort. A hydrocele can be treated in several ways by surgical and non-surgical means if it is causing discomfort.



Epididymal cysts

These are small fluid filled cysts, which may contain sperm. They are usually about the size of a pea but can be larger. They are smooth and spherical and tend to be found in the head of the epididymis. They are not cancerous and can be aspirated (drained) or removed surgically if needed.

For more information visit: www.yourprivates.org.uk

Testicular Pain

There are several things that can cause testicular pain, for instance wearing underwear that is too tight as well as sexual arousal with an erection but without ejaculation (*also known as blue balls*). If a man is very physically active there is always a chance that they may strain their lower back or groin while playing sport, which then may irritate nerves in the lower body and cause testicular discomfort. Pain from *blue balls* will usually go after a few hours while chronic sports damage may need further input from a GP or physiotherapist.

Risk factors for testicular cancer

- Men born with an undescended testicle where the testicle fails to descend into the scrotum.
- A brother/father with testicular cancer.
- A previous history of testicular cancer.
- Caucasian men have a higher risk of testicular cancer than men from other ethnic groups.
- Poorly functioning testicles (sperm production/fertility).
- There is some evidence that taller than average men have an increased risk of testicular cancer.

Go on check em out!

Testicular Self-Examination (TSE) is the easiest way to identify any potential testicular problems. It takes a few minutes to perform and gives lads a good excuse for feeling their balls. It's best performed after a bath or shower when the scrotum will be warm, relaxed and pleasant to touch. **Checking on a regular basis, especially if risk factors are present, can help identify a potential problem.**

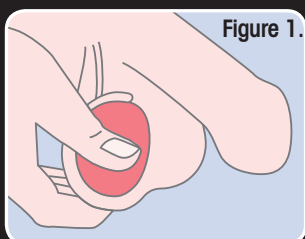


Figure 1.

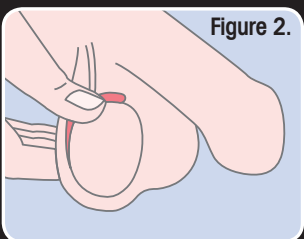


Figure 2.

1. Check each testicle separately using one, or both hands (**fig.1**).
2. Roll each testicle between the thumb and forefinger to check that the surface is free of lumps or bumps. Do not squeeze!
3. Men should get to know their balls; their size, texture, anatomy. Identify the epididymis or sperm collecting tube, often mistaken for an abnormal lump that runs behind each testicle (**fig.2**).

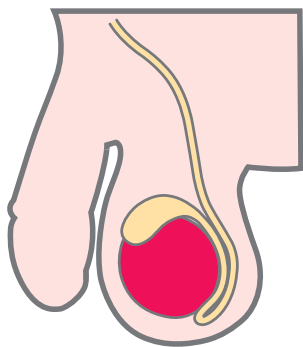
Lads should

- Get to know their balls and what is normal for them (one is likely to be larger or hang down lower).
- Get checked out by a GP if they find something that feels different or abnormal. Chances are that it won't be cancer (about 96% of abnormalities aren't cancer) but it still needs to be checked.

For video advice on self-examination visit:
www.yourprivates.org.uk

Facts about testicles

- The testicles hang behind the penis, packed in the scrotum.
- It is normal for one testicle to be slightly larger than the other, although the size and shape of each should be roughly the same.
- They start growing around the age of 11-12 and by early adulthood measure about 5cm long, nearly 2.5cm in breadth and about 2.7cm in height. Weighing in at around 10-14 grams.
- They produce sperm and testosterone and are located outside of the body because sperm develop best at a temperature several degrees cooler than the normal internal body temperature.



Keeping fit and avoiding too much fatty or fried food, sugar and caffeine, can keep testosterone healthy.

What is testosterone?

Testosterone is the male sex hormone and 90% of testosterone is made by the testicles. It is responsible for male characteristics such as:

- mood
- body and facial hair
- low voice
- the ability to have an erection
- muscle development
- sex drive (libido)

Testosterone friendly food

Asparagus

Almonds and nuts

Eggs/Avocado

Brown rice, white meat (chicken), salmon, peanuts, beans and cheeses

Bananas

Blueberries, cantaloupe, pineapple, citrus fruits, spinach, tomatoes and red peppers



What do you call yours?

Testicles aka – acorns, baby-makers, back wheels, baubles, bum balls, chestnuts, cods, conkers, cream crackers, doodads, figs, globes, goolies, hairy conkers, heirlooms, jingle berries, knackers, knob nuts, love apples, love nuts, love spuds, marble halls, meaty bites, nads, nobby halls, nuggets, nutmegs, nuts, plums, pounders, rocks.

The scrotum aka – ball bag, bag-of-tricks, ball-basket, ball-sack, daddy-bag, happy-sack, sack-o'-nuts, sleeping-bag, sperm-sack, tadpole-carrier, tool-bag, winky-bag.

DID YOU KNOW?

A man's testicles can increase in size by up to 50% when he is aroused.

The testicles of the Right Whale are thought to be the biggest in the animal kingdom. Each thought to weigh around 500kg each!

This leaflet has been produced by 'Your Privates' to help make lads aware of testicular health

Signs and symptoms of testicular cancer

- a small firm sometimes painless lump attached directly to the testicle itself
- swelling pain, discomfort or enlargement and hardness of the testicle
- an unusual difference between the testicles
- a sudden collection of fluid in the scrotum
- a dull ache in the lower part of the abdomen, the scrotum or groin

Rarely

- pain in the back caused by cancer affecting glands (small organs) in the back of the abdomen.
- breast and nipple tenderness (gynaecomastia) caused by a hormone produced by some types of testicular cancer.

If caught early testicular cancer is around 98% curable. Treatment will usually involve removal of the testicle (orchidectomy) through the groin, (no cut will be made to the scrotum itself) during a minor operation.

An orchidectomy may be the only treatment a man may need with an early diagnosis, but even if testicular cancer is found at a later stage and has spread outside the testicle, the majority of men will be cured with the addition of chemotherapy treatment.

Orchid has a Male Cancer Helpline manned by specialist nurses on

0808 802 0010

or email helpline@orchid-cancer.org.uk



Did you know?

Testicular cancer most commonly affects younger men aged between 15 and 45.

Over 2,400 cases of testicular cancer are diagnosed each year.

Testicular cancer is still rare compared to other cancers.