

Patients guide to common testicular problems

EXCISION OF HYDROCELE

A hydrocele is a collection of fluid which develops around the testicle within the scrotal (testicular) sac. The condition is harmless, but some men find it very uncomfortable. Sometimes the fluid is removed by aspiration (drawn off with a needle) but the condition may recur and a minor operation may be required to cure the problem. This is where a small cut is made, usually in the scrotum. The fluid is removed and the fluid sac lining is either stitched in place or removed. This is daycase surgery and you may need some time off work to recover.

REMOVAL OF AN EPIDIDYMAL (TESTICULAR) CYST/LUMP

An epididymal lump may be a cyst (small fluid-filled sac) or a small amount of tissue found on the epididymis of a testicle. This is a quick operation where a small cut is made in the scrotal sac through which the cyst/lump is removed. A piece of tissue (if a lump) may be sent off to the laboratory for analysis.

ORCHIDECTOMY

Men have two testicles (testis) which sit in the scrotal sac by the penis. Sometimes it is necessary to remove one or both of these testes. A small cut is usually made in the groin area of the affected side, and the testicle removed. Some men have a false testicle implanted at this time. You should discuss this with your urologist before to your operation.

RADICAL ORCHIDECTOMY (for testicular cancer)

Men have two testicles (testis) which sit in the scrotal sac by the penis. Sometimes it is necessary to remove one of these testicles, usually because a

testicular tumour (cancer) is suspected. A cut is usually made in the groin area of the affected side and the testicle and surrounding tissue removed. This tissue is sent to the laboratory for analysis (biopsy), with a result available 7- 10 days later. We will usually offer to implant a false testicle (prosthesis) at the same time. Please discuss this with your urologist before your operation. Your urologist will also discuss sperm storage with you if this is relevant

STERILISATION BY VASECTOMY

A vasectomy is an operation that is performed to sterilise the male. It should be considered as irreversible. It should therefore only be undertaken after careful thought and consideration by a couple who have decided not to have (more) children. It is sometimes necessary to have the written consent of both man and female partner before this procedure can take place. The operation is more than 99% effective. However, a sperm count at about 3 months after the operation will confirm whether sterility has been achieved. You are advised to use a method of contraception until this sterility has been confirmed. The operation: This involves making two small incisions in the scrotum. The tube coming from each testicle (of which there are two) which carry the sperm will be isolated and cut. The ends of these tubes remaining in the scrotum will be tied off. The cuts in the scrotum will then be sealed using one or two self-dissolving stitches.

VARICOCELE

This is like a varicose veins in the scrotal sac which sit just above the testicle. The classic description in large varicocoeles feel like a bag of worms when standing upright. They can present with a lump or thickening, pain more like a dull ache or with fertility problems. They do not always need surgery, and there are numerous treatment options available.