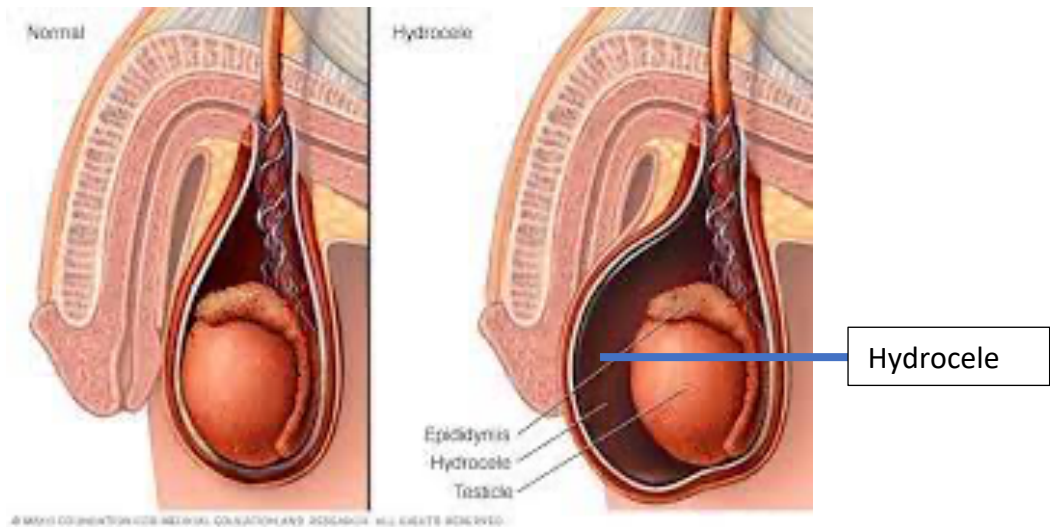


# Hydrocele Information

## What is a hydrocele?

A hydrocele is a collection of fluid that occurs around a testicle. The normal testicle is surrounded by a smooth tissue sac. It makes a small amount of 'lubricating' fluid to allow the testis to move freely. Excess fluid normally drains away into the veins in your scrotum. If the balance is altered between the amount of fluid that is made and the amount that is drained, fluid accumulates as a hydrocele. Approximately 1% of men will develop a hydrocele.



## What causes a hydrocele?

For most people, the cause of their hydrocele is unknown. A minority of hydroceles are caused by conditions that affect a testicle. These include infection, inflammation, injury or tumours of the testicle (rare). Previous surgery in the groin is associated with hydrocele formation.

## Why do people have surgery to remove a hydrocele?

Many people have a hydrocele and never have surgery. Common reasons to have surgery include pain, embarrassment, or swelling bad enough to interfere with sex or urinating.

## What is a hydrocelectomy?

Hydrocelectomy is surgery that is done to remove or repair a hydrocele. It is performed as an outpatient surgery and requires an anesthetic.

## What should I expect after my hydrocelectomy?

After your anesthetic, you require a drive home and to have an adult with you for 24 hours. Do not drive, operate machinery, drink alcohol, or make important decisions for 24 hours after surgery.

You will have discomfort/pain (not severe pain), bruising, and swelling for 1-2 weeks after your hydrocelectomy. A small amount of bleeding from the incision is expected during this time. To help with pain after surgery, take acetaminophen (Tylenol) 975 – 1000 mg and ibuprofen (Advil) 400 mg every six hours for 2 days, then every six hours as needed. **If you have an allergy to one or both medications, do not take them. If you are on a blood thinner, aspirin, or have a history of stomach ulcers or kidney failure, do not take ibuprofen.** If your urologist gave you a prescription for pain killers, use them as directed. Wear what you feel is most comfortable.

You should expect bruising of the scrotum after your surgery. This may take a month to resolve. You may have a small tube (drain) coming out of the bottom of your scrotum. If this is the case, your urologist will organize for it to be removed at your local health care centre. It is normally only in the scrotum for a few days. Your nurse will give you instructions about caring for the drain.

Your stitches will dissolve, and the knots will fall off. This usually occurs within two weeks. If a stitch falls out early, do not panic. Your incision will heal. If a stitch takes longer to fall out, be patient, as they will eventually. If you have concerns, call your urologist.

It is acceptable to take a shower starting the day after surgery. Do not swim, go in a hot tub, or take a bath for the first two weeks after surgery.

For the first week after surgery, avoid strenuous activities, but feel free to go for walks and perform daily activities that you feel comfortable doing. After week one, you can ease yourself back into other activities, with a goal to be back at your full activity level within 2-3 weeks after surgery. If something hurts, listen to your body, and stop. Try again in a few days. **You may resume sexual activity, including masturbation, after four weeks have passed if your incision appears to be completely healed.** Your hydrocelectomy should not affect your ability to get an erection or ejaculate.

## What are potential complications of hydrocelectomy?

Complications after hydrocelectomy are not common, but they can occur. Complications that may occur include:

- Wound infection –increasing pain and swelling in the scrotum, with skin becoming pink or red with pus coming from the wound. Fever may occur.

- Excessive bleeding – presents as a large amount of bleeding from the incision, or a large amount of bruising and swelling of the scrotum.
- Damage to the testicle, epididymis, or vas deferens is a rare complication
- Hydrocele recurrence – About 5% of people who have a hydrocele develop a hydrocele on the same side in the future.

**If you feel you are experiencing a complication, you should contact your urologist. If they are unavailable, you should present to your local emergency department if you require immediate attention. Be sure to tell the nurses and doctors in the emergency department that you had a hydrocelectomy.**