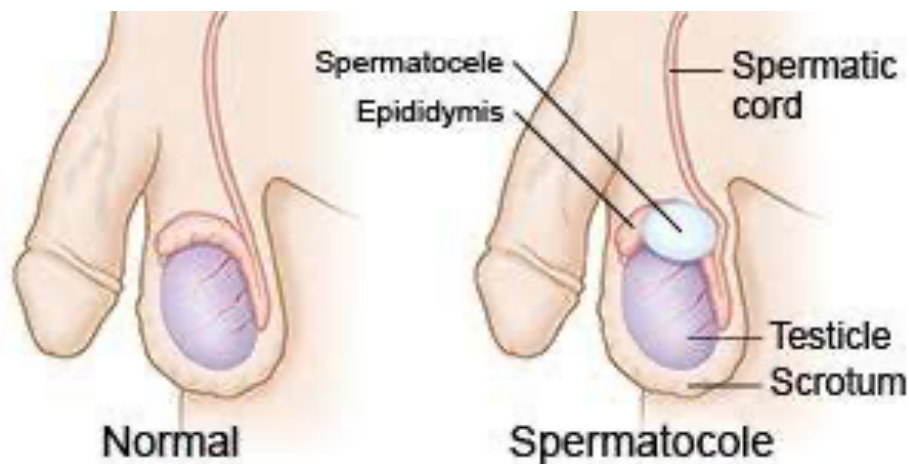


# Epididymal Cyst (Spermatocele) Information

## What is an epididymal cyst (spermatocele)?

An epididymal cyst (spermatocele) is a painless, fluid-filled cyst in the long, tightly coiled tube that lies above and behind each testicle called the epididymis. Epididymal cysts are very common and are not cancer (and do not lead to cancer). They are usually filled with milky or clear fluid that may contain sperm. An epididymal cyst feels like a smooth, firm lump in the scrotum above or behind the testicle.



## What causes an epididymal cyst?

For most people, the cause of an epididymal cyst is unknown. They may be associated with blockage of the epididymis or vas deferens (the tube that carries sperm from the testicle).

## Why do people have surgery to remove an epididymal cyst?

Many people have an epididymal cyst and never have surgery. Common reasons to have surgery include pain/heaviness, embarrassment, or swelling bad enough to interfere with sex or urinating.

## What is an “epididymal cystectomy”?

An epididymal cystectomy is surgery that is done to remove an epididymal cyst. It is performed as an outpatient surgery and requires an anesthetic.

## What should I expect after my surgery?

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 surgery. 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 surgery should not affect your ability to get an erection or ejaculate.

## What are potential complications of surgery?

Complications after epididymal cystectomy 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

**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 an epididymal cyst removed.**