

Hydrocele Repair

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What does the procedure involve?

The procedure involves an operation to remove or repair a fluid filled sac surrounding the testicle. This fluid filled sac is known as a hydrocele. The operation aims to prevent further fluid from accumulating.

What are the alternatives to this procedure?

These are the alternatives to the procedure: Observation or removal of the fluid within the sac using a needle.

What should I expect before the procedure?

Before your surgery, you will normally receive an appointment to attend a pre-operative assessment clinic. This will assess your general fitness, take some measurements such as blood pressure, weight and possibly additional tests, and screen for the bacteria MRSA .

You will be asked not to eat or drink for 6 hours before surgery and, immediately before the operation you may be given a pre medication by the anaesthetist which will make you dry-mouthed and pleasantly sleepy.

You should bring with you a pair of tight fitting underwear for support after your operation as this will reduce the chances of post-operative swelling and bruising.

On the day of the operation, when you come to the hospital, you will be seen by members of the urology team that will include the consultant or specialist registrar who will be carrying out your operation. The surgeon will talk you through the procedure and ask you to sign a consent form agreeing to treatment.

What happens during the procedure?

During the surgery either a general anaesthetic or a spinal anaesthetic will be used. A general anaesthetic is where you are put to sleep for the procedure. A spinal anaesthetic is where you are awake for the procedure but you won't be able to feel anything from the waist down. Your anaesthetist will discuss which type of anaesthetic is most appropriate for your individual case. Both methods of anaesthesia are effective.

The operation itself will involve the surgeon making a small incision in the scrotum. The surgeon will then drain the fluid, within the sac around the testicle. The sac is turned inside out and stitched to hold it in place to prevent the fluid from re-

accumulating. Sometimes, the surgeon may choose to remove the fluid sac completely.

What happens immediately after the procedure?

After your surgery a member of the urology team will come and see you. They will tell how the operation went and what to expect after the operation.

As at any stage in your operation, feel free to ask questions and raise any concerns you have.

In the days after the operation you may experience some discomfort and swelling. This is normally well controlled with painkillers, which will be given to you after the operation to take home.

The stitches usually used are absorbable and do not require removal.

The operation is normally performed as a day case and patients usually go home on the day of their operation.

You should wear the tight fitting supportive underwear that you have brought with you on the day of the operation. You should continue to wear this day and night for 1 week after the operation, apart from when in the shower.

Are there any side-effects?

Most operations have the potential to cause side effects. The following complications are recognised side effects of hydrocele repair. However be reassured that the majority of patients undergoing hydrocele repair do not suffer any complications:

Common side effects (1 in 10):

- Swelling of the scrotum lasting for several days
- Yellow fluid seeping for the scrotum several days after the operation

Occasional side effects (Between 1 in 10 and 1 in 50):

- Collection of blood around the testicles, which normally resolves slowly but may require surgical drainage
- Infection of the incision in the scrotum or of the testicle itself. This may require treatment with antibiotics or surgical drainage.

Rare (Less than 1 in 50):

- Re-accumulation of the fluid surrounding the testicle
- Chronic testicular or scrotal pain

What should I expect when I get home?

Before being discharged from hospital you will be given advice about your recovery at home. You will be told about ongoing follow-up arrangements. Follow-up will normally be with your GP but may be arranged at the hospital, with your surgeon.

When you are discharged from hospital, you will be given a discharge summary, containing information about the details of your admission and operation. If you need to see another doctor shortly after your operation, it is important to take this summary with you. Your GP will receive an electronic copy of the discharge summary.

Following the operation the wound should be kept clean and dry for 24 hours. After 24 hours you can remove any dressings and give the area a short wash. Sometimes a plastic film is used rather than a dressing. You should not remove this. It will flake off when healing has occurred. It is advisable to avoid long washes until the wound heals. Bathing can lead to the stitches dissolving too early and in turn may cause infection, it is therefore advised you avoid bathing for 1 week.

You should continue to wear tight fitting underwear day and night for 1 week apart from when in the shower.

After a hydrocele repair, you should have 7-14 days off work. You should avoid strenuous exercise, heavy lifting and sexual intercourse for 14 days or until any discomfort has settled.

Are there any other important points?

A lumpy area above or behind the testicle is common following the operation. It is often permanent but is nothing to worry about.

Following the operation, if you develop increased scrotal swelling, pain or redness or a fever you should see your GP urgently

Contact Details and Telephone Numbers

If you have any concerns or need further advice please contact the urology department at the Royal United Hospital, Bath.

During office hours **Monday to Friday 9am-5pm:-**

If you have been in hospital within the last 2 weeks please ring our main hospital switchboard on 01225 428331 and ask for the Urology Nurse Practitioner.

Alternatively, please ring the urology nurses based in the out-patients department:-

- Via Urology Reception 01225 825990
- Urology Nurse Specialists 01225 824034
- Urology Out-Patient Nurses Office 01225 824819
- Uro-oncology Nurses 01225 824250

Please note the nurses' numbers have an answerphone as they may be in clinic but all answerphones are checked regularly and messages responded to.

For **out of office hours** please contact your GP Surgery for their twilight and out of hours service.

For BANES Twilight and Out Of Hours Service please ring 01225 832383 between 6pm-8am.

The Sirona Care & Health Continence Promotion Unit is based at St Martin's Hospital and they can be contacted on 01225 831766.

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.