

Testicular Self-Exam

Most people think that cancer is a disease that only old people get. Cancer of the testicles — the male reproductive glands — is different. It is one of the most common types of cancer in men 15 to 34 years old.

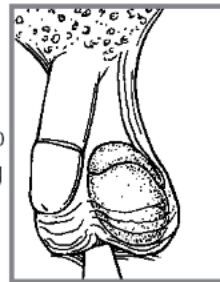
Most testicular cancers are found by young men themselves. By doing a regular exam of your testicles, you greatly increase your chance of finding testicular cancer early if it does occur. It takes only 3 minutes a month to do a simple check for lumps on your testicles.

Here's How:

1. Do the exam once a month, after a warm bath or shower when the scrotal skin is most relaxed.
2. Roll each testicle gently between the thumb and first two fingers of both hands. The testicles should be smooth, with the consistency of a hard-boiled egg without the shell.
3. Feel for the small, comma-shaped cord, about the size of a pea, that is attached at the back of each testicle. This is a natural part of your testicles, and is called the epididymis. Learn what it feels like, so you will not confuse it with an abnormal lump.



4. Check each testicle for lumps. If you find a lump, tell your doctor about it right away. Not all lumps are cancerous, but only your doctor will be able to tell the difference. Don't let fear keep you from getting the medical help you need.



What Is Normal?

- Testicles hang in the scrotum, and are about the same size.
- The left testicle usually hangs down a little more in the scrotum than the right testicle.
- A rope-like structure called the spermatic cord runs from your scrotum up into your groin.

What Are Possible Signs of Cancer?

- A lump on one of the testicles, which usually doesn't hurt.
- One testicle that gets larger than the other.
- A dull ache in your groin that doesn't go away.
- Your testicles feel heavy, like they are dragging.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

Illustrations by Lauren Shavell

From your doctor

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