

Repair of hydrocele: information for patients

What does the procedure involve?

This is the removal or repair of a fluid sac surrounding the testicle to prevent further accumulation of fluid.

What are the alternatives to this procedure?

Observation, removal of the fluid with a needle, various other surgical approaches.

What should I expect before the procedure?

You will usually be admitted on the same day as your surgery. You will normally receive an appointment for pre-assessment before your admission, to assess your general fitness and to perform some baseline investigations. After admission, you will be seen by your Consultant. You will be asked not to eat or drink for 6 hours before surgery.

What happens during the procedure?

Either a full general anaesthetic (where you will be asleep throughout the procedure) or a spinal anaesthetic (where you are awake but unable to feel anything from the waist down) will be used. All methods minimise pain; your anaesthetist will explain the pros and cons of each type of anaesthetic to you. After shaving the area, the surgeon will make a small incision in the scrotum and drain the fluid from around the testicle. The remaining sac is then stitched up with absorbable sutures. Occasionally, the surgeon may remove the sac completely.

What happens immediately after the procedure?

You may experience discomfort for a few days after the procedure but painkillers will be given to you to take home. Absorbable stitches are normally used which do not require removal. The procedure is usually done as a daycase.

Are there any side-effects?

Most procedures have a potential for side-effects. You should be reassured that, although all these complications are well-recognised, the majority of patients do not suffer any problems afterwards.

Common (greater than 1 in 10)

- Swelling of the scrotum lasting several days
- Seepage of yellowish fluid from the wound several days after surgery

Occasional (between 1 in 10 and 1 in 50)

- Blood collection around testes which resolves slowly or requires surgical removal.
- Possible infection of the incision or the testis requiring further treatment with antibiotics or surgical drainage

Rare (less than 1 in 50)

- Recurrence of fluid collection
- Chronic pain in the testicle or scrotum

What should I expect when I get home?

The wound should be kept clean and dry for 24 hours. Thereafter, if a dressing is in place, this can be removed following a short bath or shower. Until the area heals, do not have lengthy baths or showers since this will encourage the stitches to dissolve too quickly and may cause infection. It is advisable to wear supportive underpants or a scrotal support until the swelling and discomfort have settled. You are advised to take 10-14 days off work and should avoid any strenuous exercise or heavy lifting to allow wound healing. Sexual intercourse is best avoided for 10 days or until local discomfort has settled.

What else should I look out for?

If you develop a temperature, increased redness, throbbing or drainage at the site of the operation, please contact your GP. Some lumpiness above or behind the testicle is common following the procedure and is often permanent

Procedure code for insured patients: N1100



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For your peace of mind

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