



# A guide to...

## Testicular pain and/or swelling *Patient Information*

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There are numerous causes for testicular pain and/or swelling in children. If your child experiences any abnormal or new onset of testicular symptoms or pain, particularly pain and/or swelling with a sudden onset you should seek immediate medical help.

### What are testicles?

The testes (testicles) are two small organs located under the penis and inside the scrotum. They are connected to the inside of the body by the spermatic cord, which contains nerves, blood vessels and tubes, which move sperm from the testicles to the penis. The testicles are involved in the production of sperm and the hormone testosterone, which is central to male development.

### What causes testicular pain and /or swelling?

There are numerous causes for testicular pain and/or swelling with the following two considered to be medical emergencies:

- Testicular torsion - **medical emergency**
  - Twisting of the cord (spermatic cord), which carries blood to the testicles. This stops the blood supply to the testicle, causing pain and swelling.
  - Most common between 10-25 years old.
  - No known specific cause.
- Irreducible inguinal hernia – **medical emergency**
  - Part of the intestine slips into the groin and cannot be pushed back into place.

Other causes include:

Torsion of the testicular appendage- twisting of a vestigial appendage, located along the testicle. The appendage has no function, this condition is therefore not harmful, although it may cause pain.

- Epididymo-orchitis - Inflammation and infection of the epididymis (tube which stores and transfers sperm) and testicles.
- Trauma / injury
- Hydrocele – collection of fluid inside the scrotum (painless)
- Varicocele – swollen veins in the testicles)
- Tumour – often presents as a hard lump.

### **Investigations & Treatment**

- Physical examination - you can remain with your child throughout or if your child is older and prefers for you not to be present a chaperone will be provided.
- Urine sample – to test for infection.
- Viral swabs – may be completed due to some viruses such as enterovirus, adenovirus and mumps being linked to epididymo-orchitis.

If infection is suspected / confirmed your child may be started on antibiotics to treat the infection.

If testicular torsion or irreducible inguinal hernia is suspected your child will require emergency surgery, under general anaesthetic under the care of the surgical team. Depending on your child's age, they may need to be transferred to a specialist hospital for the surgery to be completed.

### **RED FLAG (WORRYING) SYMPTOMS**

- Severe, sudden onset of pain in one or both testicles
- Testicular swelling and/or increased size of one or both testicles
- Testicular pain with nausea, vomiting and / or abdominal pain
- A hard lump felt on one or both testicles.
- Known diagnosis of hernia with testicular pain.
- Any changes to the testicles or anything unusual.

### **Caring for your symptoms at home**

If your child experiences any abnormal / new onset of testicular symptoms or pain, particularly pain and/or swelling with a sudden onset you should seek immediate medical help.

### **When to seek further help?**

**Return to CED if your child shows any of the red flag symptoms detailed above.**

If you have concerns that your child is not showing signs of improvement or is worsening please:

- Contact your own GP for reassessment
- Call 111 out of normal working hours for advice
- Return to CED.

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