



MID-JERSEY PEDIATRICS

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TESTICULAR EXAM: CANCER SCREENING

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 fingers of both hands. The testicles should be firm and smooth, like hard-boiled eggs without the shell.
3. Feel for the small comma-shaped cord, about the size of a pea, which is attached to 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 cancer, but only your doctor will be able to tell the difference. Do not let fear keep you from getting the medical help you need.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

1. Your parents can often answer many of your questions.
2. There are good books about teenagers and the changes their bodies go through during puberty in many libraries and bookstores; take a look at them.
3. Health classes are often a good source of information. Do not be afraid to ask the teacher questions. Ask your pediatrician about what is normal. If you suspect a problem, check with your doctor right away.

WHY SHOULD I BE CONCERNED ABOUT CANCER?

Most people think that cancer is a disease that only old people get. Cancer of the testicle is different. It is one of the most common types of cancer in men 15 to 34 years old. While anyone can get cancer, your risk of getting testicular cancer is much higher if:

- **You have a testicle that never came down into the scrotum.**
- **Your testicle came down into the scrotum after you were 6 years old.**
- **You have a family member with testicular cancer.**

Nearly all cases of testicular cancer can be completely cured when they are found early. "Early," means when the cancer is just a lump in the testicle, before it has had a chance to spread. Treatment does not mean losing your ability to have normal sex or to have children. Treatment does mean that you could save your life.

WHAT IS NORMAL?

- The left side of the scrotum usually hangs down a little more than the right. Both should be about the same size.
- A small, comma-shaped cord about the size of a pea, called the epididymis, is attached to each testicle at the back.
- A rope-like cord called the vas deferens runs from your scrotum up into your groin.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF CANCER?

If you notice any of the following, you should see your pediatrician as soon as possible:

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

Remember, most of the time these problems will not mean cancer, but they still need to be checked.