

TESTICULAR CANCER



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

Uncontrolled growth of malignant cells in the testicle. There are several types of testicular cancer, some more dangerous than others. This is the most common form of cancer in young men. Affects all ages, but more often is found in men ages 20-40.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- A firm swelling in one testicle discovered by accident or by self-examination.
- No pain (90% of cases).
- Sense of fullness in the scrotum.

CAUSES

Unknown.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Undescended testicle(s) in infancy even if the testicle was surgically moved into the scrotum.
- Caucasian race.
- Estrogen administration to the mother during pregnancy.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Males should examine testicles routinely at least once a month. Will not prevent the cancer, but may detect a tumor early enough to provide assurance of cure.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Most types of testicular tumors are curable with surgery and other treatment. A few types are extremely malignant and have a high death rate unless discovered and treated early. Removal of one testicle does not interfere with normal sexual function or the ability to have children.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

Without treatment, some tumors may spread to other parts of the body.



TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Diagnostic tests may include ultrasound, CT scan of scrotum and abdomen, chest x-ray, radioimmune assay (a special laboratory blood study), and lymphangiography (X-ray of the lymph glands). Tests are to verify the diagnosis and to determine if cancer has spread.
- Surgery to remove the cancerous testicle is the main form of treatment.
- Radiation therapy or chemotherapy following surgery for some types of tumors.
- Additional information available from the American Cancer Society, local branch listed in the telephone directory, or call (800) ACS-2345. Another source is the Cancer Information Clearinghouse at (800) 4-CANCER.

MEDICATIONS

- Anticancer drugs (chemotherapy).
- Pain medicine if needed.

ACTIVITY

- Resume your normal activities as soon as possible. Radiation and chemotherapy may cause temporary fatigue requiring extra rest.
- Resume sexual relations when you are able. Contraception may be necessary for 12 to 18 months because some forms of treatment cause temporary genetic damage to sperm in the remaining testicle.

DIET

No special diet.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You have a firm swelling or mass in the scrotum.
- New, unexplained symptoms develop. Drugs used in treatment may produce side effects.