

Patient Information

Hydrocele

Children's Services



Introduction

The purpose of this leaflet is to explain the treatment of a hydrocele.

Cause

As a male baby grows and matures during pregnancy, the testicles develop in the abdomen and then move down into the scrotum through an area called the inguinal canal. Shortly after the baby is born, the inguinal canal closes, preventing the testicles from moving back into the abdomen.

A collection of fluid in the scrotum is called a hydrocele. The fluid in a hydrocele comes through the fine tube which did not close off after the testicle descended into the scrotum during development.

The Operation

The operation is called a hydrocelectomy. One small incision is made in the groin area. The tube is identified and tied off, and the fluid from around the testicle is drained.

Risk

There is a small risk of infection and children may be given antibiotics before or during the operation in order to prevent infection.

Anaesthetic

Your child will be admitted into hospital as a day case and will need a general anaesthetic for the procedure to be done.

Anaesthetic drugs remain in the body for 24 – 48 hours so it is important that your child rests at home with a responsible adult during this time.

After the Operation

The dressing that has been used to cover your child's wound must be left in place for five days after the operation. This will ensure good healing. Any stitches that were used to close the wound will dissolve and do not need to be removed.

The dressing is not completely waterproof so please try to avoid getting it wet until removal at five days. Do not use bubble bath or other additives in the water and avoid swimming until the wound is completely healed and has been checked by your surgeon.

There will be some bruising and tenderness after the operation. It is recommended that you give regular pain relief up to a week post-operatively. Paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen should be sufficient. Your child's nurse will give you advice regarding this.

Your child will be seen by the surgeon before discharge home and an appointment will be made for you to bring him back to an outpatient clinic in two weeks time.

Your child will probably find their own level of activity but, as a general guide, he should not attend school/nursery for a week and avoid contact sports such as football, rugby or judo for about 10 days after the operation.

On your return home please encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids and offer him a light diet, avoiding greasy foods. Ensure your child has passed urine before bedtime.

Do not worry if your child feels sick or vomits once or twice after leaving hospital. The anaesthetic can cause this and it is not an uncommon side effect.

If this occurs stop giving food for about an hour and try small amounts of water or diluted juice every 20 minutes then a light diet such as plain biscuits or toast. If your child continues to vomit please call for advice or attend your nearest A&E.

Whilst at home please be alert for any signs that the site of the surgery has become infected.

These include:

- Your child being in a lot of pain, and the prescribed pain relief not working.
- Your child having a high temperature (fever) of 38°C (100.4°F) or above.
- The site of the surgery being red, inflamed and/or feeling hotter than the surrounding area.
- A discharge of fluid or pus from the site of the surgery.


With any of these signs please contact your GP / A&E as soon as possible.

Please check the dressing regularly for signs of excessive bleeding. It is normal for the dressing to be bloodstained but if there is blood oozing from under the dressing, sit your child down and apply firm pressure using a folded tea towel for 20 - 30 minutes.

If the bleeding does not stop please attend A&E for the wound to be reviewed. Do not remove the dressing yourself at this point.

Further information

NHS 111


 111

or Contact your GP


NHS website - www.nhs.uk

Useful Telephone Numbers


Bluebell Ward, Lister Hospital
Stevenage

 01438 284008

Children's Emergency Department
Lister Hospital

 01438 284333

Urgent Care Centre, New QEII
Welwyn Garden City

 01707 247549

Community Children's Nursing Team

 01438 288370