



Pediatric Surgical Associates, Ltd.

Testicular Torsion

What is a testicular torsion?

The spermatic cord contains blood vessels that supply blood flow to the testicles. Testicular torsion happens when the spermatic cord becomes twisted, cutting off blood supply. Sometimes, the spermatic cord can become twisted and then untwist itself without treatment. This is called intermittent testicular torsion, and it can make testicular torsion more likely to happen again in the future. **Testicular torsion is a medical emergency and requires immediate surgery to save the testicle.**

What causes a testicular torsion?

Testicular torsion can happen to boys of any age, but it's most common in teenagers. Most often there is no obvious cause, but can happen after an injury, during exercise, or even during sleep.

What are the symptoms?

If your son has testicular torsion, he will feel sudden, possibly severe pain in his scrotum and one of his testicles. The pain can get worse or ease a bit, but probably won't go away completely.

Other symptoms:

- swelling in the scrotum
- nausea or vomiting
- one testicle may be high than the other

If your son has sudden pain in his scrotum or testicle, bring him to a hospital emergency room as soon as you can. Because surgery might be necessary, it's important to **not** give your son anything to eat or drink before seeking medical care.

How is it diagnosed?

History of reported symptoms and physical exam by a health care provider. Most often a scrotal ultrasound will be done.

How is it treated?

Testicular torsion almost always needs surgery to fix. In rare cases, the doctor might be able to untwist the spermatic cord by pushing on the scrotum, but most boys will still need surgery to stitch both testicles to the scrotum to prevent testicular torsion from happening in the future.

What happens during surgery?

Your son will receive a general anesthetic to help him sleep and not feel pain during the surgery. A local block (numbing medicine around the surgical area) will be given.



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Small cuts are made in the scrotum, the spermatic cord is untwisted, and the testicles are stitched to the inside of the scrotum to prevent future torsions.

Will my child be in pain?

Most children do well with the surgery. If your child is in pain, a pain medicine can help. You may alternate Acetaminophen (Tylenol® or another brand) and Ibuprofen (such as Advil® or Motrin®). Do not give aspirin because it may cause bleeding.

- Your child may be sent home with other pain medications, always follow your surgeon's specific instructions.

What can I expect after the surgery?

Before your child is discharged you will be given written information about their care at home and any questions you have will be answered.

- **Diet:** Resume regular diet as tolerated
- **Activity:** Your child may return to school or daycare when pain is well controlled. Avoid straddling activities, contact sports and swimming for 14 days.
- **Wound care:** Expect swelling, bruising and redness of the scrotum and groin. Minor bleeding or spotting at incisions is not unusual. Your surgeon will explain any dressing cares. Wearing scrotal support and ice will help minimize swelling.
- **Bathing:** It is ok to take a bath 24 hours after procedure. Bathe (5-10 minutes) in plain water for the next 7 days. A daily warm bath will help the healing and provide comfort.
- **Medicines:** You may alternate Acetaminophen (Tylenol® or another brand) and Ibuprofen (such as Advil® or Motrin®). Do not give aspirin because it may cause bleeding.
 - Your child may be sent home with other pain medications, always follow your surgeon's specific instructions.

What to call the surgeon for:

- Fever with worsening redness or drainage at surgical area
- Significant swelling, bruising, or bleeding at surgical area
- If the incision(s) separate

Call your primary care doctor for any other concerns.

Follow-up care: Follow-up with your child's surgeon as directed following the surgery. Call your surgeon's office to schedule an appointment at (612) 813-8000 option 3

Questions?

This information is not specific to your child but provides general information. If you have any questions, please call your surgeon's office at (612) 813-8000 option 6