



**Brighton and Sussex
University Hospitals**
NHS Trust

Radical Orchiectomy

Department of Urology

Patient Information

This leaflet answers some of the questions people ask about a radical orchidectomy operation. If any further questions are raised after reading this information, please speak to a member of the medical and/or nursing staff at any time during your stay in hospital.

Your doctor has informed you that you should have your testicle removed as they suspect you have a testicular cancer.

Statistics show that testicular cancer remains one of the most curable cancers. Extra tests such as blood tests and a scan may be organised before your admission to hospital.

What is an orchidectomy?

The operation to remove the testis is known as an orchidectomy and is performed under a general anaesthetic (you will be asleep).

The operation will involve making a small incision in your groin and your affected testicle will be removed by this route. The procedure takes about 30 minutes. It involves complete removal of the testicle on that side.

What are the potential risks and side effects?

Any operation and anaesthetic carries risks: these are generally small and not doing the operation may carry a greater risk.

Risks of anaesthetic can be discussed with the anaesthetist who will be looking after you during the operation and who will normally visit you beforehand.

Possible risks and side effects are outlined below. However, if you have any concerns please discuss them with the nursing or medical staff as it is important that you understand what is going to happen to you.

- Bruising and swelling of the scrotum
- Discomfort in the groin area
- Infection at the wound site

Although you will sign a consent form for this treatment, you may at any time after that withdraw consent. Please discuss this with your medical team.

What should I do before I come into hospital?

Before your radical orchidectomy, a nurse and doctor may see you in a preassessment clinic. During this assessment they will assess your suitability for the operation and the anaesthetic and ensure that you have had the relevant tests and examinations prior to your admission.

They will give you some instructions to follow at home before the surgery such as not having to eat or drink for six hours prior to your surgery. This is essential as the anaesthetic can make you feel sick.

You should also be introduced to a Specialist Nurse before or during your admission to hospital who may also be able to answer any questions you have.

What should I expect on the day of my operation?

You will be admitted on the day of your surgery having had a bath or shower that morning. When you arrive on the ward you will be shown to your bed/chair. You will see the anaesthetist to discuss any concerns you have and you will be assessed for the type of anaesthetic required.

The nurse will provide you with an operating gown and anti-thrombus stockings (used to prevent blood clot formation). They will check that you are ready for surgery. Soon after a porter will arrive and you will be taken on a bed to the operating department.

You will be checked again by operating department staff before being given an anaesthetic and taken into the operating room.

When the surgery is completed, you will be taken to the recovery room and remain there until you wake up from the anaesthetic. This may take a little while. You will return to the ward when the operating department staff are happy with your condition.

When you wake up you may find that you have a drip (fluid given into your vein) to prevent dehydration. Your groin wound will have a simple dressing on it.

What will happen immediately after my operation?

- You may eat and drink when you are fully awake.
- You will feel some discomfort but this can be controlled with simple painkillers. If you do experience pain or discomfort you must inform a member of the nursing staff so that they can give you appropriate painkillers.
- Your blood pressure and heart rate will be checked at regular intervals along with your groin wound.
- It is usual to feel sore and tired following the operation but you should be out of bed and gently walking around the next day.

How long will I be in hospital?

Usually overnight.

What happens when I am ready to go home?

- Your wound will have stitches which will dissolve (they do not need to be removed). The ward nurses will provide you with a letter for your GP. It is advisable to see your GP or practice nurse if you experience any redness, swelling, increased pain or discharge from the wound.
- There will be bruising in your groin and scrotum. You may find it more comfortable to wear supportive pants rather than boxer shorts.
- You can bath or shower 48 hours after your operation but make sure that you dry the wound thoroughly by gently dabbing the area.

Some commonly asked questions

How much pain will I be in?

There will be some discomfort in your groin and scrotum. Simple painkillers such as paracetamol should control this.

When can I exercise?

You will be able to gently increase your activity in the first few days after your operation. You should avoid heavy activity such as lifting and contact sports for approximately two weeks.

When can I drive?

When you feel comfortable and able to do an emergency manoeuvre. You should check with your insurance company as well.

When can I return to work?

This will depend on your job and how you are feeling physically and emotionally after your operation. You may want to wait until further test and scan results are available and any other appointments have been made. You should ask for a sick certificate before leaving hospital.

When can I have sex?

When you are comfortable.

The removal of one testicle will not affect your sexual performance or your ability to father children as long as the remaining testicle is healthy. If you require further treatment, issues around your fertility will be discussed with you.

Can I have an artificial testicle (prosthesis)?

Yes although this is usually not recommended at the time of your operation because of the risk of infection.

Who should I contact if I have questions or worries?

You should have the contact details for the Urology Cancer Nurse Specialist in the hospital where you have had your operation. You can also contact your GP.

Follow up

The role of the surgical team at BSUH is to perform the orchidectomy and make a diagnosis.

You will also see a Consultant Oncologist who specialises in the care of testicular cancer who will explain your histology (operation results) and scan results. They will carry out all further follow up including treatment if necessary.

Will I need further treatment?

This will depend on your histology (operation) results and the results of a CT (CAT) scan which you will have.

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Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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