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PS06lite Hydrocele Repair (child)

Expires end of December 2012
Issued January 2012

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This document will give you information about a hydrocele repair. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is a hydrocele?

A hydrocele is a swelling around the testicle caused by a collection of fluid.

All boys have a connection between their abdomen and scrotum before they are born. By birth, this connection is usually closed. If it stays open, the fluid that surrounds the bowel may trickle down and collect in the scrotum (see figure 1).

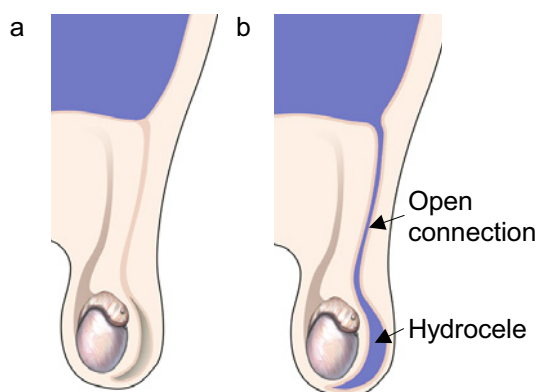


Figure 1

a Normal development

b An open connection causing a hydrocele

What are the benefits of surgery?

Your child should no longer have the hydrocele.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Surgery is usually recommended if the connection has not closed by the time the child is three to four years old.

What does the operation involve?

Most hydroceles in children are repaired through a cut in the groin. The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes between half an hour and three-quarters of an hour.

Your surgeon will find the connection and tie it off.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Unsightly scarring

2 Specific complications

- Developing a lump under the wound
- Injury to nerves that supply the skin around the groin
- Damage of the blood supply to the testicle
- Damage to the tube that carries sperm

How soon will my child recover?

Most children go home the same day. Your child will usually be well enough to return to school after a week or so. In a small number of cases the hydrocele can come back.

Summary

A hydrocele is a common condition where fluid collects around a testicle. Surgery is usually recommended if a hydrocele continues beyond the first three to four years of life.

Acknowledgements

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