

Pediatric Urology Associates, Ltd.

& Pediatric Enuresis Center of Arizona

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TESTICULAR SELF-EXAMINATION

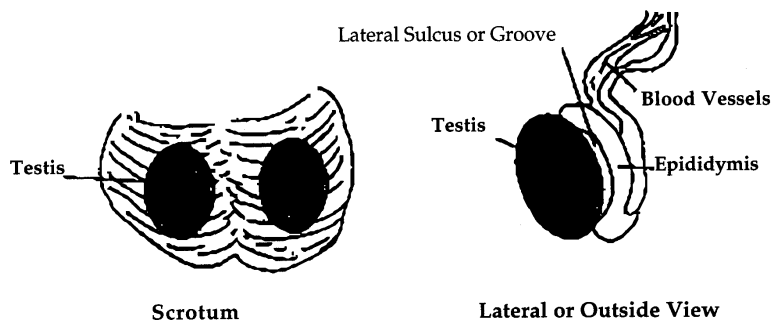
Regular examination of the testicles should be a routine part of the health program of every adult male. The main reason for this suggestion is that cancer of the testicles is one of the more common tumors that occur in men, particularly between the ages of 20 and 40.

All males should learn self-examination and make a point of checking themselves each month. Only by learning what the normal anatomy of the testicles feels like will they be able to detect any changes that might occur.

The exam should be done in a comfortable position. Some men prefer to check themselves in the shower or bathtub. The shape and position of the testicle should be inspected. On the outside or lateral surface a groove called the lateral sulcus can be felt between the testicle and the epididymis, which connects to it. The testis normally feels firm but not too hard.

Areas of the testicle which feel very hard or tender may be due to a growth (tumor) which can sometimes be a cancer. When found these should be checked promptly by an urologist. Most testicular cancers are curable when discovered early.

Boys with an undescended testis (UDT) have an increased risk of testicular cancer. There is no evidence that early surgical correction decreases that risk. Also both testicles are at increased risk of cancer even if the child had unilateral UDT. The risk of cancer is greatest after puberty. This is when routine exams should begin.



Pain in the testicle may be due to injury, infection or tumor, but the most immediate worry is torsion. This is twisting of the testicle which causes acute pain and swelling. If the twist is complete and unreleased, the testicle's blood supply will be blocked and the testicle will die. In some cases the twisting is intermittent. All cases of acute testicular pain should be seen by a urologist urgently.