

# TESTICULAR SELF-EXAMINATION



## BASIC INFORMATION

This is an exam of the testicles to look for lumps that may be testicular cancer. The testicles are the male reproductive organs, and produce sperm and the hormone testosterone. They are located in the scrotum under the penis.

The exam should be performed on a monthly basis, especially if you have a family history of this cancer, have had a previous testicular tumor, or have an undescended testicle.

### NORMAL TESTICLES

Each testicle should feel firm but not rock hard. One testicle may or may not be lower or slightly larger than the other. Normal testicles contain blood vessels and other structures that can make the exam confusing. Performing the self-exam monthly allows you to become familiar with your normal anatomy. Then, if you notice any changes from the previous exam, this will alert you to contact your health care provider. Always ask your health care provider if you have any doubts or questions.

### HOW THE TEST IS PERFORMED

- Perform this test during or after a shower. This way, the scrotal skin is warm and relaxed. The test is best done while standing.

1. Gently feel your scrotal sac to locate a testicle.

2. Firmly, but gently roll the testicle between the thumb and fingers of both hands to examine the entire surface. Feel the testicle for lumps, swellings, or other changes in consistency.

3. Repeat the procedure with the other testicle.

- Examine the epididymis for lumps. This is a rope-like cord that is located behind each testicle. This area is fairly tender, so be cautious with your touch.

- Examine the spermatic cord for lumps. This is the sperm-carrying tube that extends from the epididymis of each testicle.

### ABNORMAL FINDINGS

A lump, swelling, or other change on the testicle, epididymis, or spermatic cord may be the first sign of testicular cancer. Therefore, if you find a lump, see a health care provider right away. Keep in mind that some cases of testicular cancer do not show symptoms until they reach an advanced stage.



### NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You find a small hard lump (like a pea), have an enlarged testicle, or notice any other differences from your last self-exam.
- You can't find one or both testicles. The testicles may not have descended properly in the scrotum.
- There is a soft collection of thin tubes above the testicle. It may be a collection of dilated veins (varicocele).
- There is pain or swelling in the scrotum. It may be an infection or a fluid-filled sac (hydrocele) causing blockage of blood flow to the area.
- Acute pain in the scrotum or testicle is a surgical emergency. If you experience acute pain in the scrotum or testicle, seek immediate medical help.

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Special notes:

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