Orchidectomy

Patient Information Leaflet

What is an orchidectomy?

Orchidectomy is an operation to remove the testicle. The procedure is generally performed by a specialist or consultant urologist. Some patients may need a bilateral orchidectomy which is the removal of both testicles (your doctor will discuss this thoroughly with you before your procedure). The operation is often performed as same-day surgery, meaning you can return home within hours of the procedure. You may be able to choose to have a prosthetic (artificial) testicle inserted into your scrotum, please discuss this with your consultant.

How is an orchidectomy performed?

An incision is made on the side next to the testicle that is to be removed. The testicle is then pulled up through the inguinal canal, the spermatic cord is clamped off in two places and cut between the clamps.

What are the reasons for an orchidectomy being performed?

The reasons for having an orchidectomy may be because of:

- Torsion (twisting of the spermatic cord that supplies blood to the testicle) of the testicle resulting in permanent damage
- Infection - in rare cases where it doesn’t respond to anti-biotics.
- Undescended testes (may have increased risk of becoming cancerous).
- Chronic testicular pain
- Cancer of the testicle

What are the adverse side-effects of this procedure?

Because an orchidectomy cannot be reversed, it may potentially impact on your fertility. Please discuss this with your consultant if you have any concerns.

What does this operation involve?

Generally the operation is carried out as a day case.

This procedure can be performed under a general anaesthetic, although it is most commonly performed under a local anaesthetic.

If you are having a general anaesthetic, you will have a pre-screening appointment to assess your suitability for day surgery.

What happens before the operation?

Before admission you will need to have a pre-operative assessment. This is an assessment of your health to make sure you are fully prepared for your admission, treatment and
discharge. If you prefer we may be able to do this over the telephone, but you may need to come to the hospital if we need further tests. The pre-operative assessment nurses will help you with any worries or concerns that you have and will give you advice on any preparation needed for your surgery. Please read the instructions given to you very carefully before the date of your admission.

If you are undergoing a general anaesthetic you will be given specific instructions about when to stop eating and drinking and if you are on medications we will advise you which medications you should take and which you should not take.

Please follow these instructions carefully as otherwise this may pose a risk and we may have to cancel your surgery.

You should bath or shower before coming to hospital. You will be asked to change into a theatre gown when you arrive.

On admission a member of the nursing staff will welcome you. The nurses will look after you and answer any questions you may have. The surgeon and anaesthetist will visit you and answer any questions that you have. You will be asked to sign a consent form.

A nurse will go with you to the anaesthetic room and stay with you until you are asleep. A cuff will be put on your arm, some leads placed on your chest, and a clip attached to your finger. This will allow the anaesthetist to check your heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen levels during the operation. A needle will be put into the back of your hand to give you the drugs to send you to sleep.

Are there any risks?

Possible risks for this procedure may include:

- Excessive bleeding from the incision site
- Haematoma (an accumulation of blood within the tissues that clots to form a solid swelling)
- Bruising around the groin
- Infection
- A small risk of anaesthetic complications.

Please discuss this with your surgeon and anaesthetist.

How will I recover from having an orchidectomy?

Physical recovery from an inguinal orchidectomy is fairly rapid, and you will be able to walk around within a few hours and back to normal activities within a few weeks.

There will be some pain in the week after the procedure which is usually helped by taking painkillers. In the week after you have been discharged from hospital you will probably have to visit your GP surgery to have the wound checked by the nurse. If you are unable to do this a district nurse will visit you at home. You should take things easy in the first week and avoid any heavy lifting and driving should be avoided to reduce the risk of a hernia or similar strain injuries. It is important to keep your wound clean. Regular baths will help do this.
Is there any discharge advice?

After this operation you may need to wear supportive underwear for about a week to assist in the prevention of scrotal swelling.

- Avoid strenuous exercise for two weeks. Sexual activity may be resumed after this time or when you feel comfortable to do so.
- Obtain a medical certificate from your doctor before you leave the hospital if you need to change duties at work.
- Avoid constipation.
- See your GP promptly if you are experiencing fever, scrotal tightness, swelling or redness, discharge from the wound site, or pain that is not relieved by Paracetamol and Ibuprofen.
- Artificial testicle implants may be an option if you are concerned about any change in the appearance of your scrotum. You should discuss this with your doctor.

Contact telephone numbers

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<tr>
<th>Telephone numbers</th>
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<tr>
<td>During the hours of 8am -8pm contact the Day Surgery Unit, North East NHS Surgery Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hospital</td>
<td>0191 445 3009</td>
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<tr>
<td>During the hours of 8pm -8am contact Level 2, North East NHS Surgery Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hospital</td>
<td>0191 445 3005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urology Secretary Mon- Fri 9.30 – 4pm</td>
<td>0191 445 2218</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main switchboard</td>
<td>0191 482 0000</td>
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The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) can provide help, advice and support to patients, relatives or carers who have any questions or concerns regarding their health care. PALS are unable to give medical advice. You can contact PALS on free phone 0800 953 0667. Monday - Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm. An answer phone is available outside of these hours and calls will be returned the next working day.

Data Protection

Any personal information is kept confidential. There may be occasions where your information needs to be shared with other care professionals to ensure you receive the best care possible.

In order to assist us improve the services available your information may be used for clinical audit, research, teaching and anonymised for National NHS Reviews. Further information is available in the leaflet Disclosure of Confidential Information IL137, via Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust website or the PALS Service.

Information Leaflet: NoIL349
Version: 2
Title: Orchidectomy
First Published: June 2011
Last review: February 2012
Review Date: February 2014
Author: Kevin McEleny – Surgical Services

This leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats upon request