

Insertion of a testicular prosthesis

This leaflet explains more about your operation to insert a testicular prosthesis. It includes the benefits, risks and any alternatives, as well as what you can expect when you come to hospital.

If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is insertion of testicular prosthesis?

A testicular prosthesis is a replica testicle made out of silicone, which replaces your own testicle(s) if one or both have been removed. The removal of a testicle (orchidectomy) is most commonly performed due to testicular cancer, however some men may have one or both testicles removed for other reasons such as undescended testes, trauma, severe torsion (twisted testicle) or as a treatment option for advanced prostate cancer.

Why should I have a testicular prosthesis?

Having a testicular prosthesis improves the cosmetic appearance of the scrotum following an orchidectomy. It may also help to improve a man's body image following an orchidectomy. However, it is a personal decision and not everyone who has a missing testis wants a prosthesis. A prosthesis can be inserted at the same time as an orchidectomy or at a later date.

What are the risks?

All surgical procedures have a potential for complications, however the majority of patients who have urological procedures do not suffer any problems. Common side effects of this procedure include:

- the possibility that the prosthesis may sit and ride higher in the scrotum than the remaining testicle, especially in warm weather
- the cosmetic result not being perfect. It is not always possible to match the prosthesis exactly to the size of the remaining testicle. Up to one in four men may be unhappy with the cosmetic result.
- the risk of infection in the surgical wound, which on rare occasions may result in the prosthesis having to be removed.

How can I prepare for a testicular prosthesis?

There is no special preparation required prior to coming into hospital for this procedure, however you may wish to refer to the booklet, Welcome: Information about your stay, which will be given to you at the time of your pre-assessment appointment. This booklet offers information such as what to bring into hospital with you, and details about going home.

Giving my consent (permission)

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This states that you agree to have the treatment and you understand what it involves.

You should receive the leaflet, **Helping you decide: our consent policy**, which gives you more information. If you do not, please ask a member of staff caring for you for a copy.

What happens during insertion of testicular prosthesis?

This procedure is carried out either under general anaesthetic (where you are asleep during the procedure) or a spinal anaesthetic (where you are awake but unable to feel anything from the waist down). The testicular prosthesis is inserted into the scrotum through a small incision in the groin. The neck of the scrotum is then closed with stitches to prevent the prosthesis from moving back up to the groin.

What happens after insertion of testicular prosthesis?

After your surgery you will be taken to a surgical ward where you will recover from the immediate effects of surgery and anaesthesia. Depending on your condition you may be able to go home on the same day as your procedure, though occasionally patients stay in hospital overnight. You will be able to get out of bed and move around the ward as soon as you are awake and feel comfortable enough to do so. You will be able to eat and drink once you return to ward. The average stay in hospital following this procedure is one night.

Will I feel any pain?

You may experience some discomfort following your surgery. Whilst you are in hospital you will be given painkillers as you require them. When you go home, please take your painkillers regularly as prescribed on the packet. Do not exceed the stated dose. This pain and discomfort will settle down after a few days, but if it does not, please contact your doctor

What do I need to do after I go home?

Keep your wound clean and dry. You will find it more comfortable to wear loose fitting underwear. A brief daily shower can help the wound to heal, however you should not soak for long periods or use soap directly on the wound. Dry the wound thoroughly by patting gently with a piece of gauze. Do not rub the area. Alternatively you can use a hairdryer on a **very low heat** to dry the area.

We recommend that you gently pull the prosthesis in a downward direction on a daily basis to help set the prosthesis in the correct position.

You may develop some bruising of the scrotum – this is normal. Please do not touch your wound with your hands unless you have washed them thoroughly – this will help to help prevent infection.

Stitches:

Your stitches are dissolvable and do not need to be removed. It can take roughly between seven and 21 days for them to dissolve.

Work:

You will require about one week off work, depending on your level of comfort. If you require a sick certificate, please contact your GP.

You should avoid cycling, sports or heavy lifting for at least two weeks.

Please contact your clinical nurse specialist or your medical team using the contact details provided below if you experience any of the following:

- Persistent bleeding.
- Pain which is not controlled by the painkillers prescribed.
- A fever of 100° F (38°C) or higher.
- Swelling, redness and/or discharge from the wound.

Out of hours, please contact your GP or nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department.

Will I have a follow-up appointment?

We do not routinely follow you up after this procedure, however we do follow up selected patients depending on the procedure undertaken.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your procedure, please contact Karen Briggs (andrology nurse specialist) on **07717 346821** (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm).
Out of hours, please contact one of the urology wards:

t: 020 7188 2441 for Florence ward
t: 020 7188 0709 for Aston Key ward

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

t: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' t: 020 7188 8803 at Guy's e: pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Language Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

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