

what you NEED TO KNOW about...

Testicular Torsion: Facts for parents, health educators and coaches

Surgeons at CHEO have noticed an increase in the number of boys who have needed to have a testicle removed because of testicular torsion. These boys didn't tell anyone they were experiencing pain, so they didn't get surgery quickly enough. Please share this information with your sons, students and players. The most important message is: "If you have severe pain in your testicle, tell your parents or guardian right away. You need to have this checked out in hospital".

What is testicular torsion?

Testicular torsion happens when a testicle twists, cutting off the testicle's blood supply. It's most common in boys after puberty, but can occur at any age. Testicular torsion doesn't happen often, but when it does, it is serious. The lack of blood to the testicle causes the testicle to 'die'. Surgery can save the testicle, but it needs to be performed within 6-8 hours after the pain started.

What are the symptoms?

- Severe pain in the testicle that can even wake a boy from sleep. The pain does not get better, it gradually gets worse. Boys may also notice pain in the lower abdomen (belly) on the same side as the affected testicle.
- Nausea and vomiting (although not everyone gets this).

How is testicular torsion treated?

Testicular torsion can be fixed with surgery, but the surgery must happen within 6 –8 hours. If the testicle does die, it will still have to be removed surgically.

What causes it?

It's just the way some boys and men are made; their testicles are not well attached to the scrotum, making it easier for the testicles to twist. Masturbation does **not** cause testicular torsion. Sometimes it happens after being hit in the groin.

What do boys need to know about it?

Boys need to know that they have to tell someone if they are experiencing pain in their testicles. They need to get to the hospital right away if they have severe pain in a testicle that is getting worse.

Want more info?

American Urological Association
www.urologyhealth.org

Click on 'pediatric conditions', then
type 'testicular torsion' in the search
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