

Testicular Cancer

Testicular cancer occurs when cells in the testicles grow and multiply uncontrollably, damaging surrounding tissue and interfering with the normal function of the testicle. If the disease spreads, it is still called testicular cancer.

Your best chance for surviving testicular cancer is detecting it early. When detected early, there is nearly a 95 percent chance for cure.

To the surprise of many young men, testicular cancer is the most common cancer in men between ages 20 and 34. However, it accounts for only one percent of all cancers that occur in men.

Symptoms

Symptoms of testicular cancer vary from man to man and may include any of the following:

- small, hard lump that is often painless
- change in consistency of the testicles
- feeling of heaviness in the scrotum
- dull ache in the lower abdomen or the groin
- sudden collection of fluid in the scrotum
- pain or discomfort in a testicle or in the scrotum

Having any of these symptoms does not mean you have cancer, but if you notice one or more of them for more than two weeks, see your doctor.

Risk Factors

Many factors may influence the development of testicular cancer, including:

- **age** Most cases occur in men between the ages of 15 and 40, but testicular cancer is the most common cancer in men age 20 to 34.
- **race** White men are about five to 10 times more likely to develop testicular cancer than men of any other race.
- **family or personal history** Men with a family history (father, brother, son) of testicular cancer, or who previously were treated for testicular cancer, are at higher risk.
- **undescended testicle (cryptorchidism)** Men with testicles that did not move down into the scrotum before birth are at increased risk. Men who had surgery for this condition are still at high risk.
- **abnormal testicular development** Men whose testicles did not develop normally are at increased risk.
- **Klinefelter's syndrome** This is a sex chromosome disorder that may be characterized by low levels of male hormones, sterility, breast enlargement and small testes.



Fate has thrown Michael Wilson a few tough curves. A lifelong athlete, he discovered a testicular lump when he was 21. Doctors told him he might never play baseball again, a sport he had played since he was three years old. Within weeks of finishing treatment, he rejoined his college team and went on to play professional baseball.

The Best of Testicular Health

Screening

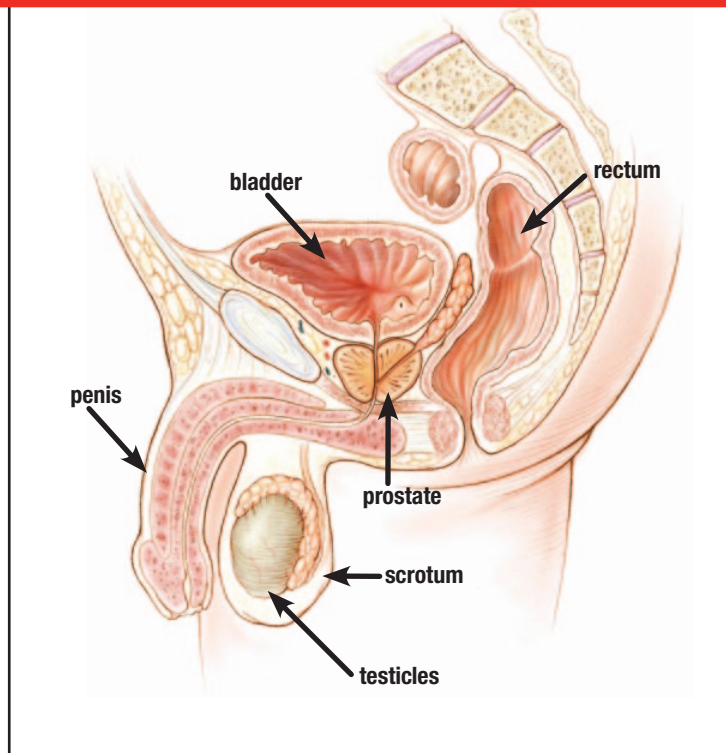
Most testicular cancers are found by men themselves, either unintentionally or through self-examination.

Men who notice anything unusual about their testicles should consult a doctor. If exam results suggest cancer, more extensive diagnostic tests should be conducted.

Reducing Your Risk

Many testicular cancer risk factors, including age, an undescended testicle, race and a family history of the disease, are unavoidable because they are present at birth. Also, many men with testicular cancer have no known risk factors.

For these reasons, it is currently impossible to prevent most cases of this disease. This makes it important for men at average risk to be aware of symptoms and seek prompt medical attention if symptoms persist. Take the time to discuss your own risks with your health care provider who can best advise you on risk-reduction strategies that are right for you.



The testicles (also called testes) are a pair of male sex glands. They produce and store sperm and also are the body's main source of male hormones. These hormones control the development of the reproductive organs and male characteristics. The testicles are located under the penis in a sac-like pouch called the scrotum.

MD Anderson Resources

The Cancer Prevention Center can help you understand your risk of developing cancer through risk assessment and, when appropriate, genetic testing. The center offers personalized risk-reduction strategies, including healthy lifestyle recommendations and the use of medications to reduce cancer risk. Specialists perform risk-based cancer screening exams based on age, gender and cancer risk factors.

MD Anderson provides cancer care services at five convenient locations in the greater Houston area: Bay Area, Katy, Texas Medical Center, Sugar Land and The Woodlands.

For more information about MD Anderson programs or services, or to make an appointment, contact askMDAnderson at 1-877-MDA-6789 and ask for Carla, or visit www.mdanderson.org/ask.

Want to learn how you can prevent cancer?

Get a personalized action plan by completing MD Anderson's Cancer Risk Check at www.mdanderson.org/riskcheck.



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