Excision of an Epididymal Cyst

Your consultant has diagnosed that you have an epididymal cyst and has recommended that you have an operation to remove it.

What is an epididymal cyst?
An epididymal cyst is a fluid filled swelling in the epididymis (part of the tube-work which carries sperm from the testicle to the sperm store sac). It is common to have more than one epididymal cyst.

What are the benefits of having excision of an epididymal cyst?
Having the epididymal cyst excised will remove the swelling within your scrotum and any symptoms this may have caused.

What are the risks, consequences and alternatives associated with having excision of an epididymal cyst?
Most operations are straightforward, however as with any surgical procedure, there is a small chance of side-effects or complications such as:

- You may experience some bruising and discomfort around the wound and scrotum - this is quite common.

- More uncommon complications include infection requiring treatment with antibiotics and continued bleeding after the operation, requiring a further small operation to stop it.

- Having excision of an epididymal cyst may lead to impaired sperm and potentially affect your ability to father a child. (However you must not, rely on this as a form of contraception).

If you are concerned about any of these risks, or have any further queries, please speak to your consultant.

Your consultant has recommended this procedure as being the best option. However, the alternatives to this procedure are either having it drained with a needle or, observing it for any changes in size. If you would like more information about these, please speak to your consultant or one of the nurses caring for you. There is also the option of not receiving any treatment at all. The consequences of not receiving any treatment are that your symptoms may get worse. If you would like more information please speak to your consultant or one of the nurses caring for you.

Smoking cessation
Smoking greatly increases the risk of complications during and after surgery, so the sooner you can stop the better. Even a few days before your operation can help to improve healing and recovery afterwards. See Useful contacts for details of free NHS Stop Smoking Services.
Getting ready for the operation
You may be asked to attend the Pre-operative Assessment Clinic. A nurse will discuss the operation with you. You may need to undergo some routine tests before your operation eg. heart trace (ECG), x-ray, blood test.

For a time before certain types of anaesthetic you will need to stop eating, drinking and chewing gum. This will be explained to you and you may also be given a booklet about this. If you have any questions please contact the hospital - telephone number on your admission letter.

You will be asked some routine questions about your general health, the medicines you take at the moment and any allergies you have.

You will be asked to sign a consent form to say that you understand what you have come into hospital for and what the operation involves. You will be able to discuss the operation with your surgeon.

On admission
Your details will be checked on a number of occasions before having the procedure. This is normal practice and is for your safety.

You will be given a theatre gown to wear. A nurse or porter will take you on a trolley to the anaesthetic room.

What sort of anaesthetic will I have?
Most epididymal cyst operations are carried out under a general anaesthetic and you will be fully asleep. In some cases the operation may be carried out with a local or spinal anaesthetic. Your anaesthetist and surgeon will advise you as to which is the best option for you.

What should I expect after the operation?
When the operation is over you will have your pulse, blood pressure, breathing and wound checked regularly by a nurse.

If you experience any pain it is important to tell the nurses, who can give you painkillers to help.

You may find that you have a scrotal support on. This helps to keep you comfortable and prevents excessive bruising.

You may start taking sips of water as soon as you return from your operation. When you are fully awake you may eat and drink as normal. Anaesthetics can make some people sick. If you feel sick we will advise you not to drink until this feeling has passed. The nurse may offer an injection if the sick feeling does not go away, this will help to settle it.

Going home
Some people go home on the day of the operation, others the following morning. You will be able to go home on the day of your operation if:

- You have recovered well from the anaesthetic and are eating and drinking.
- Your wound is not bleeding.
- You can get up and about and are comfortable.

Please note, to go home on the day of the operation you will need an adult to collect you and stay with you overnight.
**DISCHARGE INFORMATION AND AT HOME ADVICE**

**Instructions for patients going home on the day of the operation**
The anaesthetic drugs remain in your body for 24 hours and during this time are gradually excreted from the body. You are under the influence of drugs during this time and therefore there are certain things that you should and should not do.

**You should:**
- Ensure that a responsible adult stays at home with you for 24 hours.
- Rest quietly at home for the rest of the day - go to bed or lie on the settee.
- Drink plenty of fluids, but not too much tea or coffee.
- Eat a light diet eg. soup or sandwiches. Avoid greasy or heavy food as this may cause you to feel sick.
- Lie flat if you feel faint or dizzy.
- Contact the Urology Assessment Unit if you have any problems passing urine within 24 hours of going home.

Have a lie in the next day. It could take 2 - 3 days before the weariness wears off and you could suffer lapses in concentration for up to a week.

**For at least 24 hours after your operation you must not:**
- Drive. Your insurance company may refuse to meet a claim if they feel you have driven too soon. It is also advisable to contact your insurance company with regards to cover following a general anaesthetic.
- Go back to work. See ‘Returning to normal activities’.
- Lock yourself in the bathroom or toilet or make yourself inaccessible to the person looking after you.
- Operate any domestic appliances or machinery.
- Drink alcohol.
- Make any important decisions or sign any important documents.
- Be responsible for looking after small children.
- Watch too much television, read too much or use a computer as this can cause blurred vision.

**Pain relief**
It is usual to feel some pain after this operation. Take either the painkillers you were given from the hospital or a mild painkiller such as Paracetamol - follow the manufacturer’s instructions and do not exceed the stated dose.

You will be provided with a support which will help reduce discomfort. Please wear this (or a supportive pair of pants) until you are pain-free.
Wound care
There will be a light dressing underneath the support. This should be removed after 24 hours.

You may then bathe or shower.

A further dressing is not necessary but you may find the support more comfortable with one in place. You will be provided with some light dressings for this reason.

It is normal to be bruised and swollen - this will subside over the next few weeks. However excessive swelling is not normal.

Look at your wounds each day - if they become hard, red or start to bleed and swell much larger than when you left hospital, please contact the Urology Assessment Unit (within 24 hours of going home) or your GP (if problems occur later on).

All skin stitches dissolve.

Returning to normal activities
Heavy duties such as lifting may be resumed as you feel able (probably 2 - 4 weeks after your operation).

It is normal to feel more tired than usual for a few weeks after having an operation. This will pass.

After the first 7 days of sickness for which you can self certify, a certificate (sick note) may be issued to cover your stay in hospital. This will also cover your first 7 days at home. Any further certification (if necessary) should be obtained from your GP.

You may return to work when you feel comfortable - probably 2 - 4 weeks after your operation.

Further appointments
If a further appointment is required the details will be posted to you. If you have any problems, please see your GP.

Useful Contacts

NHS Derby City Stop Smoking Service (Fresh Start)
Freephone 08007076870
www.freshstart.nhs.uk

Derbyshire County Stop Smoking Service
Freephone 08000852299
www.derbyshirestopsmokingservice.nhs.uk

If you have any queries, or require further information please telephone the
Royal Derby Hospital on 01332 340131 and ask for your ward/clinic or the
Urology Assessment Unit on 01332 785899

NHS Direct is a 24 hour nurse led, confidential service providing
general health care advice and information.
Telephone 0845 4647 or visit the website at www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Reference: Accessed August 2007: www.surgerydoor.co.uk

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