

Hydrocele - Infant

Definition

- A hydrocele is fluid around the testicle. This fluid collects in the scrotum (the sac around the testicles).

Health Information

Symptoms

- Hydroceles make the scrotum look swollen. They can feel squishy.
- Hydroceles can be by one or both testicles.
- Hydroceles are harmless. They don't cause pain.

Causes

- Hydroceles are common. 10% of all baby boys are born with one.
- They are more common in premature babies.
- Hydroceles can happen as your baby develops during pregnancy. In the womb, the testicles start in the baby's belly. As the baby grows, they travel down into the scrotum.
- Sometimes, the tunnel they go through stays open. This tunnel lets fluid move into the scrotum.
- As your baby gets older, the tunnel will normally close on its own. This stops the hydrocele.

Diagnosis

- A doctor can most often diagnose a hydrocele on a physical exam.

Care Advice

1. Key Points

- Hydroceles are painless and harmless.
- Most hydroceles go away on their own.
- Here is some home care advice that should help.

2. Hydrocele Care for Babies

- Most often, no treatment or surgery is needed for hydroceles.
- Most go away on their own by age 1.
- If the hydrocele stays after age 1, talk with your doctor about treatment options.

3. What to Expect

- Most baby boys born with a hydrocele will have it until around age 1.

Call Your Doctor If

- Pain occurs
- Hydrocele is still there when your child is older than 1 year
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

Author: Barton Schmitt MD, FAAP

Copyright: 2000-2024 Schmitt Pediatric Guidelines LLC

Disclaimer: This health information is for educational purposes only. You the reader assume full responsibility for how you choose to use it. The information contained in this handout should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. Listing of any resources does not imply an endorsement.