



University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust



Radical Orchidectomy

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Introduction

This leaflet has been written for you to give you information and advice about your pending operation. If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to call the number at the end of this leaflet.

What is a Radical Orchiectomy?

A radical orchiectomy is an operation to remove one or both testicles.

This is usually performed because a testicular tumour has been detected, although it can be required as a result of trauma or chronic infection to the testicle.

Testicular tumours usually affect young males and can be detected by self-examination.

Why do I need a Radical Orchiectomy?

It is likely that your consultant has detected a tumour in your testicle and this needs to be removed surgically.

Testicular cancer can be cured if caught early enough and some patients may need chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy. All this will be discussed with you by a specialist nurse. The first treatment is surgery to remove the affected testicle.

What happens when I am admitted to hospital?

You will normally be admitted the day of your operation. The doctor and nurse will ask you questions about your past medical and surgical history. It is important to bring any medication you are taking with you so these can be prescribed during your hospital stay. The registrar or your consultant will ask you to sign your consent form prior to your operation.

It is sometimes necessary to have blood tests, chest X-rays prior to your anaesthetic.

It is possible to have an artificial testicle (prosthesis) placed in at time of surgery. You will be asked about this, so you should consider whether you would like a prosthetic testicle. You can of course have this put in with another operation at a later date if you prefer. If this is required we would always try and match the size and shape of the artificial testicle with your natural one on the other side.

The operation takes about 30 minutes and is performed under general anaesthetic.

You will have small scar on your abdomen/groin.

Your doctor will want you to wear a scrotal support after surgery or a firm pair of underpants. This makes the wound area feel more supported and therefore more comfortable.

On return to the ward the nurse will record your blood pressure and pulse for a few hours after the procedure. Once you have recovered from the anaesthetic you will be able to eat and drink normally.

Please ask the nursing staff if you need any medication for pain or discomfort.

When can I go home?

Usually this is the day after your operation. Occasionally some patients go home the evening of their surgery. This is very much an individual thing and cannot be predicted 100% before surgery.

You will have dissolvable stitches in the wound but they can take several weeks to dissolve completely. Generally the wound can be left exposed with no dressing required.

You will be able to have a daily shower, however we advise you do not soak in the bath as this can make the wound soggy, which

inhibits healing and can cause infection.

You will have had contact with a specialist nurse who looks after patients with testicular cancer. He will need to arrange other tests for you e.g. CT scan and follow-up appointments. The nurse will let you know of these dates either before you leave the hospital or contact you at home.

The specialist nurse is there to help you through the whole process, so do not hesitate to contact him if you need help or any questions answering.

What can I do at home?

It will be necessary for you to avoid heavy lifting, riding a bicycle, driving a car, playing sports for 2-4 weeks after surgery. This is to aid the healing process.

What problems may I experience?

It is normal for there to be some swelling and bruising in the scrotal area for a couple of weeks. If the swelling is troublesome, wearing the scrotal support or a firm pair of underpants can help. If you are concerned please see your doctor or ring the number at the end of this leaflet.

Some patients may develop a wound infection. This usually starts with redness and swelling around the wound area. You may notice that it is becoming more painful.

Sometimes the wound will start to discharge and although this can be alarming, it is better for this collection of fluid under the skin to drain out, as this will aid the healing process.

If you do experience any leakage from the wound please see your doctor immediately. Your doctor may need to arrange for the district nurse to visit you to perform dressings or monitor the wound.

You may also need antibiotics. Your GP will decide this.

Arrangement will have been made for you to meet the specialist nurse for testicular cancers who will then arrange for you to have scans, more blood tests and an appointment to decide on any further treatment you may need. The appointment is usually with an oncologist (cancer specialist).

Some patients need chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy but this cannot be decided until the results are back from the laboratory about what type of testicular cancer it was. You will be informed of this when you return to clinic for review appointment.

If you need any further advice please contact this number

**Ward 624, Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
0121 371 6263**



The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm

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