

Testicular Cancer Factsheet

The Facts

Testicular cancer primarily affects younger men and is the most common form of cancer in men aged between 15 and 45.

Testicular cancer is still quite rare, with about 2,000 cases a year in the UK.

The incidence of testicular cancer is increasing dramatically - more than doubling in the last 30 years - and the reasons for this are not yet known.

Thanks to advances that we have made, with treatment, testicular cancer has an overall cure rate of more than 95%. The cure rate can be as high as 99% if caught at an early stage.

What is Testicular Cancer?

Testicular cancer develops from within the cells in the testes. It usually presents itself as a lump in the testicle.

Regular self examination can help to detect this cancer at an early stage.

If the cancer is not treated at an early stage, cancer cells can break away and spread to nearby lymph nodes or other organs.

If a lump or change in the testicles is identified, a GP will arrange for a diagnostic test to indicate if the lump is benign or a possible tumour.

Most lumps are not cancerous but it is important to get yourself checked out by your GP to be sure.



“ I got checked out and am fine, but I'm glad I saw my GP - I was so worried. ”

Risk Factors

Age

Testicular cancer is diagnosed more frequently in the young and middle-aged than in elderly men. It is most common in men aged between 15-45.

Undescended testis at birth

The most significant risk factor, this condition may increase the risk of testicular cancer by five to ten times.

Family history

Having a father, brother or son who has had testicular cancer increases the risk of getting the disease. Inherited genetic factors may play a role in up to one in five testicular cancers - which is exceptionally high when compared to other cancer types.

Previous testicular cancer

Having had testicular cancer before increases the risk of developing cancer in the other testicle. However, cancer in both testicles is extremely rare.

Race and ethnicity

Testicular cancer is most common in Caucasians. With the exception of New Zealand Maoris, the disease is rare in non-Caucasian populations.

We do not know enough about what causes testicular cancer to occur or how to prevent it. Everyman is carrying out the research to find the answers.

Signs & Symptoms

Regular self examination will help you become more aware of the normal feel and size of your testicles so that any abnormalities can be spotted early on:

A lump in either testicle

Any enlargement of the testicle

A feeling of heaviness in the scrotum

A dull ache in the abdomen or groin

A sudden collection of fluid in the scrotum

Growth or tenderness of the upper chest

If you do have any of these symptoms, don't just wait and hope that they disappear - go and get checked out by your doctor. Most lumps are not cancerous but the earlier you find out, the earlier you can get any necessary treatment.

And remember - if caught at an early stage, testicular can have a cure rate as high as 99%.



“Male cancer affects us all. Men and women.”

Diagnosis & Treatment

If your doctor thinks that you might be suffering from testicular cancer, he is likely to recommend one or more of the following options:

Referral to a surgeon

A blood test

A biopsy

An X-Ray

An ultrasound scan

These tests are firstly to determine whether you have testicular cancer and secondly, to discover to what extent, if any, the cancer might have spread.

What if the diagnosis is testicular cancer?

If caught early and the cancer has not spread, treatment will ordinarily be the surgical removal of the cancerous testicle. If the cancer has spread, this will usually be followed by a three to four month course of chemotherapy.

Treatment for testicular cancer may be very intensive, but most patients cured of testicular cancer have no long-term side effects from treatment. It is extremely likely that both your fertility and your sex life will recover after the end of your treatment.

If you have a testicle surgically removed, you should have the option to have a prosthetic replacement fitted. The remaining, healthy testicle tends to be able to produce enough sperm to compensate for the loss.

Thanks to advances that we have made, with treatment, testicular cancer has an overall cure rate of 95%. The cure rate can be as high as 99% if caught at an early stage.

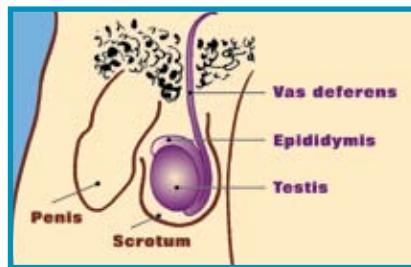


“The research is really encouraging. It's good to know someone's looking out for us men!”

Testicular Cancer Self Examination

You should carry out these easy steps regularly. A thorough examination may be easier after a warm bath or shower as the scrotal skin relaxes.

Most lumps found on the testicles are benign but any changes in size, shape or weight should be checked by your GP.



Support the scrotum in the palm of your hand and become familiar with the size and weight of each testicle.



Examine each testicle by rolling it between your fingers and thumb. Gently feel for lumps, swellings, or changes in firmness.



Each testicle has an epididymis at the top which carries sperm to the penis. Don't panic if you feel this - it's normal.



Regular self examination will help you become more aware of the normal feel and size of your testicles so that any abnormalities can be spotted early on. *If you notice anything unusual, go and see your GP as soon as you can.*

“It's easy to make checking yourself a regular thing.”



Help & Support

If you're worried that you might have symptoms, or if you or someone you care about has just been diagnosed with testicular cancer, there is a wealth of information and support to help you through this time.

Information & Advice

The following external organisations have trained professionals on-hand to offer advice and support and also provide information on prostate, testicular and other cancers:

Cancer Backup

Cancer Backup are a free cancer information service staffed by qualified and experienced cancer nurses. As well as providing help by post, phone, fax and email, they also have a number of local centres in hospitals throughout the country. Written publications on all aspects of cancer are available on their website.

Address: 3 Bath Place
Rivington Street
London
EC2A 3JR
Telephone: 0808 800 1234 (9am-8pm, Mon-Fri)
Fax: 0207 696 9002
Email: via website
Web: www.cancerbackup.org.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support

Macmillan provides practical, medical, emotional and financial support for people affected by cancer. They have specialist advisers to help identify the support you need and which organisation can best provide it.

Address: Macmillan CancerLine
Macmillan Cancer Relief
89 Albert Embankment
London
SE1 7UQ
Telephone: 0808 808 2020 (9am-6pm, Mon-Fri)
Email: cancerline@macmillan.org.uk
Web: www.macmillan.org.uk



“I've told my friends that they should check themselves.”

Information & Advice (cont)

CancerHelp UK

CancerHelp is a free information service about cancer and cancer care for people with cancer and their families. Run by Cancer Research UK it offers comprehensive information written in a way that people can easily understand. They also have specialist cancer information nurses you can call or email for further information.

Telephone: 0207 061 8355

Email: via website


Web: www.cancerhelp.org.uk

Prostate Cancer Charity

The Prostate Cancer Charity offer practical support through their information services. They have specialist nurses offering advice over the phone, on email and at several hospitals in the UK. They can help you find a local support group and offer the opportunity to contact people who have been affected by prostate cancer through their helpline or their online forum.

Telephone: 0845 300 8383 (10am-4pm, Mon-Fri plus 7pm-9pm, Weds)

Email: via website



“It's good to know I'm not the only one - it really helps.”

Support Groups

Everyman Support Group

The Everyman Support Group, founded by Wendy Gough, who lost her son to testicular cancer, offers help, advice and awareness talks through on prostate, testicular and breast cancer. You can contact her directly by:

Telephone: 01727 730 652 or

Email: wendygough@wgough.freeserve.co.uk

The following websites have been recommended to us by Everyman supporters. They offer advice, details of local support groups, or simply an individual's story of their experience.

North Durham Prostate Cancer Support Group

Stafford Scholes, Everyman supporter, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2003. He founded the North Durham Prostate Cancer Support Group to provide help and information to men in his local area. You can contact him on 0191 373 4958.

Patient UK

The Patient UK website offers health information as provided by GPs to patients during consultations. It also has a list of patient support organisations, self help groups, health and disease information providers, etc. www.patient.co.uk

Isle of Man Anti-Cancer Association

Supporters of Everyman and The Institute of Cancer Research's SAFE Campaign, this Isle of Man-based charity raises money and awareness, as well as offering supplementary services for cancer sufferers. http://www.cancer.org.im/anticancer_assoc.htm

Check Em

A prostate and testicular awareness campaign run in association with Everyman. www.check-em.com

Odyssey

Odyssey is a charity which enhances the quality of life for people with cancer through imaginative programmes of challenging and dramatic activities using the outdoors. www.odyssey.org.uk

Please note: The information presented on the web sites listed here is not under the control of The Institute of Cancer Research and should only be used to support, not replace, the advice of your own doctor. The Institute of Cancer Research cannot accept any responsibility for the misuse of this information.



“My husband had testicular cancer and we've just had our first child!”