



Almost every hour of every day one man in the United States is diagnosed with testicular cancer

ABOUT TESTICULAR CANCER

Testicular cancer is a disease in which cancer develops in one or both of a man's testicles. While rare, it is the most common form of cancer in men between the ages of 15 and 40. This year, approximately 8500 new cases of testicular cancer will be diagnosed in the U.S. Approximately 5% will not survive. The incidence of testicular cancer in Caucasian men in the U.S. has doubled over the last two decades. The cause of the increase is not known.

Men of any age, including infants and the elderly can develop testicular cancer. Many consider TC to be a “young man’s disease”, since it is the most common cancer in men under 40. Recently published studies show the incidence of testicular cancer in men under and men over 40 is almost equal.

While this disease is 95 – 99% curable when diagnosed and treated in its earliest stages, men 40 years or older who are diagnosed with the disease have twice the risk of dying of the disease than men under 40.

The death rate among Hispanic men who have the disease is approximately 60% higher than White men.

Highly Treatable, Especially When Caught Early

Testicular Cancer has one of the highest cure rates of all cancers, with a survival rate over 95 percent, *if detected and treated early*. However, the complexity of treating the disease greatly increases and the survival rate declines as the disease progresses. Unfortunately, half of all men diagnosed with testicular cancer do not seek medical attention until after the cancer has spread to other areas of the body.



If you hear “you have testicular cancer, you want to hear “we caught it early”

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WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS?

Any man, regardless of age or race, can develop testicular cancer. Research has not shown a connection between testicular cancer and any particular habits, activities, or lifestyles.

Risk factors associated with a higher potential for testicular cancer include:

Race

Caucasian men are approximately five times as likely as African-American men and twice as likely as Asian-American men to develop testicular cancer. Native American and Latino men have a greater risk than African-American men, but lower than Caucasians. However, the death rate among Hispanic men who have the disease is approximately 60% higher than White men.

Undescended or Partially Descended Testicle (cryptorchidism)

Men who have an undescended or partially descended testicle have a risk of developing testicular cancer, even if surgery was performed to remove the testicle or bring it down into the scrotum. About 14% of cases of testicular cancer occur in men with a history of cryptorchidism.

Abnormal Testicular Development

Men whose testicles did not develop normally are at increased risk. Having small testicles or testicles that are not shaped correctly may increase your risk for this form of cancer.

Klinefelter's Syndrome

Men with Klinefelter's syndrome (a sex chromosome disorder that may be characterized by low levels of male hormones, sterility, breast enlargement, and small testes) are at greater risk of developing testicular cancer.

Family History

Having a father or brother with TC increases your risk for developing the disease.

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SELF EXAM AND DIAGNOSIS

How Is Testicular Cancer Diagnosed

Most testicular cancers are found by men themselves. **Doctors should examine the testicles during routine physical exams.** Between regular checkups, if a man notices anything unusual about his testicles, he should talk with his doctor.

The Importance of Self-Examination

The vast majority of testicular tumors are discovered by men themselves, either by accident or by performing the self-examination procedure. In fact, one research report found that only 4% of all testicular tumors are discovered by physicians, usually when they are performing an exam for other reasons. As a result, regular self-examination is essential.

Symptoms

The earliest symptom of testicular cancer is most often pain, swelling, or hardness in the testis, or some combination of these symptoms. Less often, the first symptom a patient will notice is a small, painless lump on the testicle. A man with testicular cancer might also feel heaviness in the scrotum, an ache in the lower abdomen or groin area, an accumulation of blood or fluid in the scrotum, or a change in the way a testicle feels. More rarely, there is tenderness in the man's breast area usually caused by high levels of a hormone called human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG). If the cancer has spread, symptoms may include severe, unrelenting back pain, shortness of breath, or hemoptysis (coughing up blood).

There may not be any warning signs. Often, a person with testicular cancer will not feel sick. Only a doctor can make a positive diagnosis of cancer.

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THE EXAM

The testicular self-examination, or TSE, is a quick, simple, painless, exam that men can perform on themselves in the privacy of their own home. All men should perform the exam once a month. The exam takes only about three minutes to perform properly. By performing it regularly, you will become familiar with your anatomy and better able to recognize changes. The best time to perform the TSE is during or immediately after a warm shower or bath. Warm water relaxes the skin on the scrotum, making it easier to perform the TSE. Your fingers will glide more easily over soapy skin, making it easier to concentrate on the texture underneath and increasing the likelihood that you will feel any lumps or nodules on your testicles.

Performing the Exam

1. Gently examine each testicle one at a time with both hands.
2. Place your index and middle fingers under the testicle and your thumbs on top.
3. Gently roll the testicle between your thumbs and fingers.
4. Feel for any small, hard lumps on the testicle.
5. Repeat the process with the other testicle.



Look and feel for any hard lumps or nodules (smooth rounded masses) or any change in the size, shape, or consistency of the testes. You should not feel any pain when performing the TSE. It is normal for one testicle to be a little larger than the other, and for one testicle to hang down a little lower. The testicles should be smooth and firm to the touch. You should be aware that each normal testis has an epididymis, which appears as a small "bump" on the upper or middle outer side of the testis. Normal testicles also contain blood vessels, supporting tissues, and tubes that conduct sperm. Some men may confuse these with cancer. If you have any doubts, ask your doctor.

Sometimes, the testicle can be enlarged because fluid has collected around it. This is called a hydrocele. Other times, the veins in the testicle can dilate and cause enlargement and lumpiness around the testicle. This is called a varicocele. To be sure you have one of these conditions and not a tumor; you need to have a doctor examine you.

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WHAT IF I FIND A LUMP?

If you find a lump on your testicle, see a doctor immediately. The lump may not be cancer, but if it is, the chances are very good that it can be treated. **Testicular cancer has a 95% to 99% survival rate**, but it is extremely important to catch the cancer in its earliest stages. If you have any concerns about what you find during self-examination, see your doctor. Do not dismiss your concern or hope it will go away. Many men let fear or embarrassment keep them from seeking medical help. Concerns about masculinity or sexuality often present significant barriers for men faced with the need for medical attention. Testicular tumors are some of the fastest growing of all human cancers. The longer you wait to seek help, the worse your situation may be when you finally see a doctor.

There is nothing to be embarrassed about when it comes to cancer. See your doctor as soon as possible.

During routine medical exams, ask your doctor to examine your testicles.

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