

Patient Information about Varicocele

<http://www.urologychannel.com/patient-information-varicocele/index.shtml>

A varicocele is a mass of enlarged veins that forms in the spermatic cord within the scrotum or scrotal sac. Varicoceles occur as a result of impaired blood flow and are similar to varicose veins, which frequently affect veins in the legs. Varicocele is a relatively common cause for male infertility.

Varicoceles can affect men at any age and they commonly develop in puberty. Varicocele can affect one testicle or both testes, and occur on the left side in about 85% of cases. The condition often does not cause symptoms and varicocele diagnosis usually occurs during a routine physical examination.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor (e.g., urologist, pediatrician) about varicocele, varicocele treatment, and preventing varicoceles. **Print this page**, mark the questions you would like answered, and bring it with you to your next appointment. Prompt diagnosis and treatment can help improve fertility in many men with varicoceles.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Varicocele

- Why do you suspect that I have a varicocele?
- What are common varicocele risk factors?
- What other conditions can cause symptoms of varicocele, such as heaviness or aching in the testes?
- Do you suspect that the varicocele is affecting one or both testicle?
- What do you suspect is the underlying cause for the varicocele?
- Might this condition have been present since birth?
- What types of tests are involved in varicocele diagnosis?
- What do these diagnostic tests involve?
- Should I call for the test results or will someone contact me?

Date to call:

Telephone number to call:

- Is the varicocele large, medium-sized, or small?

- How likely is it that the varicocele has or will affect my fertility?
- What types of tests will be performed to evaluate my fertility?
- What do these tests involve?
- Should I call for the test results or will someone contact me?

Date to call:

Telephone number to call:

- What type(s) of treatment do you recommend?
- Why do you recommend this varicocele treatment?
- Might conservative measures, such as wearing an athletic supporter or snug-fitting underwear, help reduce my varicocele symptoms?
- What should I do if I develop severe symptoms?

Telephone number to call:

- Might you recommend surgery to treat my varicocele? Why or why not?
- What is a varicocelectomy?
- Can you describe the various procedures used to treat varicocele, such as surgical ligation, laparoscopy, and embolization?
- What are the benefits, risks, and possible complications associated with these procedures?
- How is fertility evaluated following surgery to correct a varicocele?
- About what percent of patients are able to father a child after varicocelectomy?
- What is a hydrocele and how might this condition be treated?
- How likely is a varicocele to recur following surgical treatment?

- How might recurrences be treated?
- Can varicoceles be prevented? If so, what does varicocele prevention involve?
- Can you recommend additional sources for information about varicoceles?

Notes/Additional Information