



Hydrocele Repair

Caring for your child after surgery

A hydrocele repair is an operation to keep fluid from collecting around your child's testicles. This flyer explains what to expect if your child needs this surgery.

What is a hydrocele?

A hydrocele is a collection of fluid around the testicle in the scrotum. It is caused by an opening between the abdomen (belly area) and the scrotum. Fluid drains from the abdomen into the scrotum where it builds up. You may notice that the hydrocele swelling goes down when your child is resting or lying down. When your child gets more active or cries, the hydrocele may get larger. This is normal.

How is a hydrocele diagnosed?

Your child's healthcare provider can tell whether your child has a hydrocele during a physical exam. Hydroceles are only seen in boys.

Why does the hydrocele need to be repaired?

Most hydroceles go away on their own after a few months as the body absorbs the fluid. If a child still has a hydrocele when they are 1 or 2 years old, surgery is planned because it will not go away on its own.

What can I expect from surgery?

An incision is made in the inguinal space (near the crease between the abdomen and leg) and the fluid is drained. The opening into the abdomen is then closed.

When will my child be able to go home?

Most children go home the day of surgery. If your child has another medical condition, they may need to stay overnight.

When can my child eat?

- Nausea and vomiting (throwing up) are common after surgery. If this occurs, a clear liquid diet given slowly will help.
- When fully awake, your child may have clear liquids like 7UP, Jell-O, Popsicles and apple juice.
- If your child is not sick to their stomach or throwing up and is fully awake, your child may start their regular diet.

How do I care for the surgery site?

The incision(s) should look clean and dry. A little blood under the dressing (bandage) is normal. There will be some swelling and bruising around the incision(s), which could take many weeks to go away.

To Learn More

- Urology
206-987-2509
- General Surgery
206-987-0237
- Ask your child's nurse or doctor
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers 206-987-2280 (TTY).

- Keep the incision dry for the first 48 hours (2 days) after surgery.
- The groin incision(s) will be covered with a clear glue.
- The stitches will dissolve; they do not need to be removed.

How much activity can my child do?

- Watch your child closely the day of surgery.
- Older children should limit their own activity. They should avoid rough play, contact sports and bicycle riding for at least 2 weeks.
- Sponge-bathe only for the first 48 hours after surgery. After that, your child can go back to normal bathing.

What should I give my child for pain?

- Right after surgery, it is normal to have some pain and discomfort. You know your child best. We encourage you to take an active part in your child's recovery. No matter the level of your child's pain, believe they are hurting and respond right away. In addition to medicine as prescribed for pain, encourage age appropriate coping tools to treat pain and provide support.
- Start by giving your child regular Tylenol (acetaminophen) and Motrin (ibuprofen). Check the package directions or call your child's doctor or pharmacy for the right dose.
- You may use the stronger pain medicine prescribed by your child's doctor if your child's pain does not go away. Tylenol and prescription pain medicine may not be safe to use at the same time.

When should I call a doctor?

If your child is having any problems, call their specialty surgery clinic during the day. After hours, call 206-987-2000 and ask the hospital operator for the general surgeon on call or Urology surgeon on call. Please call us if your child has any of these warning signs:

- Fever higher than 101.5°F (38.6°C) for more than 24 hours
- Redness, swelling or discharge (fluid) from the wound
- Rapid swelling or bleeding at the site of surgery
- Severe, constant pain at the surgery site
- Inability to pee in 8 to 12 hours after surgery
- Vomiting