



HYDROCOLECTOMY

What is a hydrocele?

A hydrocele is a collection of fluid in the sac within the scrotum. It is caused by an opening between the abdomen and the scrotum. You may notice that the hydrocele swelling decreases when your child is resting or lying down. When he gets more active or cries, the hydrocele may get larger. These are normal changes.

Who gets a hydrocele?

Hydroceles are only seen in boys.

How is a hydrocele diagnosed?

A hydrocele is diagnosed when a swelling in the inguinal canal is found which contains fluid instead of bowel (a hernia). Your care provider can tell whether your child has a hydrocele or a hernia by physical exam.

How is the decision made that surgery is needed?

Most hydroceles shrink over several months as the body absorbs the fluid. If the hydrocele is still present at one year of age, surgery is planned.

What can I expect from surgery?

An incision is made in the inguinal space and the fluid is drained. The opening into the abdomen is closed. Reinforced sticky bandages may be applied.

Bring for your son the day of surgery:

- A variety of favorite toys, music tapes, or books to encourage quiet time.
- A special toy or security blanket that may help to comfort your child.
- Extra pacifiers or teething toys to help soothe your baby.
- A change of clothes and loose clothes to wear home from the hospital.
- Snacks or money to buy yourself a meal. Please do not eat in front of your child.

When will my child be able to go home?

Most children go home the day of surgery. If your child has a medical condition he may stay overnight in the hospital for his safety.

What care is needed at home after surgery?

Care of the incision: A clear plastic or gauze dressing will cover the incision. Remove the dressing according to your surgeon's instructions. Expect bruising and swelling in the inguinal area for 3-5 days.

Activity limitations:

0-8 months: normal activity for age.

8 months-2 1/2 years: Be careful of toddler accidents.

2 1/2 years -12 years: Quiet supervised play for 24-48 hours. No running, contact sports or vigorous activity for 4 weeks.

Diet: Your child may eat his usual diet. It is not unusual for your child to be nauseous after surgery. If this happens, give small frequent amounts of juices or ginger ale. Some children get constipated after surgery. Give lots of fluids to prevent this. Don't let your child go more than 48 hours without a bowel movement.

Bathing: Keep the diaper area clean and dry. Bathe your child according to the surgeon's instructions.

Medication: Give medicine around the clock for the first 24-48 hours and as needed after that for 3-4 days. Please call if your child is uncomfortable.

When should I call the surgery team?

Please call the surgery team if there is bleeding or drainage from the incision, fever above 101 F., vomiting or less peeing or fewer wet diapers than usual.

When can my child return to school or daycare? Will I need a note to excuse him from PE?

Plan on a total of 3-5 days off work including the surgical day. This will allow for 2 quiet days after the operation. He should not have physical education or play contact sports for 4 weeks after surgery. Ask us for an excuse note for school.

What are the long term consequences?

The most common complications related to this surgery are bleeding and infection. Complications occur in less than 1% of the population. There is no effect on growth and development.

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