

Testicular self-examination

Don't forget!



From the age of 15, all men should examine their testicles regularly. The more familiar you are with the shape and normal size of your testicles, the earlier you can detect an abnormal sign. This fact sheet explains how to do this self-examination.

Why do testicular self-examination?

Testicular self-examination is a simple and effective technique to detect testicular cancer as early as possible. All you need is a mirror.

When should I do the testicular self-examination?

The self-examination should be done **once a month** from the age of 15, according to several groups of experts.

Why is it important to do?

When you're familiar with the shape and appearance of your testicles, you're better able to see any changes that may occur. If something seems abnormal, you can tell your doctor.

Detecting testicular cancer at the earliest signs can have a significant impact.



The earlier testicular cancer is discovered, the **better it is treated and the better the chances of cure**. Testicular cancer is quite rare, but it is still the most common form of cancer in men aged 15 to 35. For more information, see the fact sheet on [Testicular cancer](#).

What are the signs and symptoms to watch out for?

In the testicular self-examination:

- painless lump or bulge on a testicle
- pain in a testicle
- swelling of a testicle or the scrotum
- change in size, shape, or sensitivity of your testicles or scrotum

Other possible signs:

- feeling of heaviness or tightness in the lower abdomen or scrotum
- mild but constant pain in the lower abdomen and groin

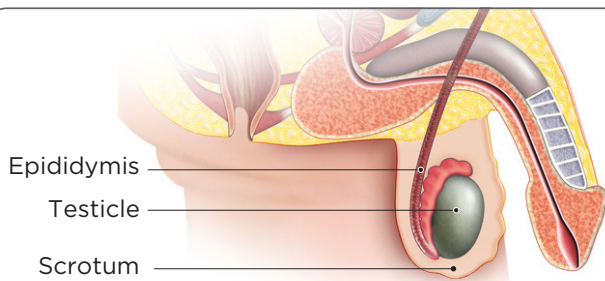
If you have any of these symptoms, it doesn't mean you have cancer. It's quite possible there is another cause. However, tell your doctor.

How do I do a testicular self-examination?

The best time to do this is right after a **bath or shower**. That's when the muscles of your scrotum are more flexible, so it's easier to tell by touch if the shape or sensitivity of your testicles has changed.

To do the self-examination

- 1 Stand in front of a mirror and look at your testicles. See if they look swollen or not.
- 2 Place your fingers under a testicle and your thumb on top. Put a little pressure on your testicle.
- 3 Gently roll your testicle between your thumb and fingers. This rotation **shouldn't be painful**.
- 4 Feel the entire surface of your testicle in this way.
- 5 Examine your other testicle in the same way (repeat steps 2 to 4).



Remember

- Testicles are usually oval (like an egg), smooth and firm.
- One testicle may be larger or lower than the other.
- A cord (epididymis) is located at the back of the testicle. It's a normal part of the testicle.
- The scrotum is the pocket that contains the testicles.

Are some men more likely to get testicular cancer?

Indeed, some men are more at risk and should therefore pay even more attention to their testicles. The following factors put men a little more at risk:

- Having a testicle that did not descend into the scrotum at birth (cryptorchidism)
- Having already had testicular cancer or having a relative who has had it
- Having had a testicular development problem during childhood

Testicular cancer can develop even in men who do not have any of these factors.

What should I do if I detect an abnormal sign during the self-examination?

If you have any of the symptoms described on page 1, consult a doctor.

Your doctor should also examine your testicles as part of your routine examination.

Who can I contact for help or to ask questions?

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact your family doctor.



USEFUL RESOURCES

Other health sheets published by the CHUM are available. Ask for those that might fit your situation.



You can also find them on our web site chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante

The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.

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