



## VARICOCELE

### **What is a varicocelelectomy?**

A varicocele is an enlargement of the veins in your scrotum. Varicocelelectomy is a surgery performed to remove those enlarged veins. The procedure is done to restore proper blood flow to your reproductive organs.

When a varicocele develops in your scrotum, it can block blood flow to the rest of your reproductive system. The scrotum is the sac that contains your testicles. Because blood can't return to your heart through these veins, blood pools in the scrotum and the veins become abnormally large. This can decrease your sperm count.

### **Who's a good candidate for this procedure?**

Varicoceles occur in about 15 percent of adult men and 20 percent of teen males. They don't usually cause any discomfort or symptoms. If the varicocele doesn't cause pain or discomfort, your doctor may suggest leaving it as is to avoid the risks of surgery.

Varicoceles often appear on the left side of your scrotum. Varicoceles on the right side are more likely to be caused by growths or tumors. If you develop a varicocele on the right side, your doctor may want to perform a varicocelelectomy, as well as remove the growth.

Infertility is a common complication of a varicocele. Your doctor may recommend this procedure if you want to have a child but are having trouble conceiving. You may also want to undergo this procedure if you're experiencing any side effects of decreased testosterone production, such as weight gain and reduced sex drive.

### **How is this procedure performed?**

Varicocelelectomy is an outpatient procedure. You'll be able to go home the same day.

Before the surgery:

Let your doctor know if you're taking medications or supplements. Stop taking any blood thinners, such as warfarin (Coumadin) or aspirin, to lower your risk of bleeding during the surgery. Follow your doctor's fasting instructions. You may not be able to eat or drink for 8 to 12 hours before the surgery. Have someone take you to and from the surgery. Try to take the day off work or other responsibilities.

When you arrive for surgery:

You'll be asked to remove your clothes and change into a hospital gown. You'll lie down on a surgical table and be given general anesthesia through an intravenous (IV) line to keep you asleep.



## **How is this procedure performed?**

Varicocelelectomy is an outpatient procedure. You'll be able to go home the same day. A small incision is taken in the groin region of about 3cm. Using a microscope the dilated veins are identified and ligated preserving the artery and lymphatics.

## **What's recovery like from the procedure?**

Surgery takes about one to two hours.

Afterward, you'll be placed in a recovery room until you wake up. You'll spend about one to two hours recovering before your doctor clears you to go home.

During your recovery at home, you'll need to:

- take any medications or antibiotics that your doctor prescribes
- take pain medications to manage your pain after surgery
- follow your doctor's instructions for cleaning your incisions
- apply an ice pack to your scrotum for 10 minutes several times a day to keep swelling down
- You will need to wear a tight supporting underwear for a few months after the procedure.

Avoid the following activities until your doctor says you can resume them:

- Don't have sex for up to two weeks.
- Don't do strenuous exercise or lift anything
- Don't swim, take a bath, or otherwise immerse your scrotum in water.
- Don't drive or operate machinery.
- Don't strain yourself when you poop. Consider taking a stool softener to make bowel movements pass more easily following your procedure.

## **What are the possible side effects of this procedure?**

See your doctor right away if you notice any of the following:

- 1.fluid buildup around your testicle (hydrocele)
- 2.difficulty peeing or fully emptying your bladder
- 3.redness, inflammation, or drainage from your incisions
- 4.abnormal swelling that doesn't respond to cold application
- 5.infection-high fever (101°F or higher)feeling nauseousthrowing up
- 6.leg pain or swelling

## **Does this procedure affect fertility?**

This procedure can help increase fertility by restoring blood flow to your scrotum, which can result in increased sperm and testosterone production.

Your doctor will perform a semen analysis to see how much your fertility improves. Varicocelelectomy often results in a 60–80 percent improvement in semen analysis results. Instances of pregnancy after varicocelelectomy often rise anywhere from 20 to 60 percent.



## Outlook

Varicocelectomy is a safe procedure that has a high chance of improving your fertility and reducing complications of blocked blood flow into your reproductive organs.

As with any surgery, there are some risks, and this procedure may not be able to fully restore your fertility. It will have a positive impact on your sperm count or sperm quality but it would take around 6 months before it is completely achieved.