

Scrotal Mass and Pain

A scrotal mass is a lump or bump in the scrotum that you can feel. It may be due to a variety of conditions, and it may be painful. Any mass should be evaluated by your health care provider as soon as possible. Your doctor will talk with you about your medical history to see if you've experienced any trauma or injury or have had an infection in the area. Treatment will depend on the underlying cause.

What is a scrotal mass?

“Scrotal mass” is a general term for a lump or bump within the scrotum that you can feel. It may be located on the surface of a testicle or free floating within the scrotal sac. In most cases, a scrotal mass is benign (not cancer). Rarely, a scrotal mass may mean cancer is present. A scrotal mass may or may not be painful.



There are many potential causes for a scrotal mass, including:

- **Benign (non-cancer) conditions:** these include collections of fluid, blood, or sperm cells (hematocele, hydrocele or spermatocele, respectively); dilated veins around the testicle (varicocele); cysts that may involve the testicles; and swelling in the epididymis (<http://www.radiologyinfo.org>) .
- **Injury or infection:** these include swelling that occurs after trauma to the testicles or scrotum; infections involving the testicle (orchitis (<http://www.radiologyinfo.org>)) or epididymis (epididymitis (<http://www.radiologyinfo.org>)); hernias; and testicular torsion (twisting of the testicle that cuts off its blood flow).
- **Cancer:** while rare, testicular cancer is the most common cancer in younger and middle-aged men. It may also occur in older men and, rarely, younger boys. White men are more likely to develop testicular cancer than Black or Asian American men. Many cases of testicular cancer are first detected by a patient feeling a lump in their scrotum through self-examination.

How is a scrotal mass diagnosed and evaluated?

Many scrotal masses may be easily found through physical examination. Benign conditions such as hematocele, hydrocele or spermatocele may first be noticed by the patient or their doctor during a routine physical. Your doctor may order a scrotal ultrasound (<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/us-scrotal>) or pelvic MRI (<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/mri-abdomen-pelvis>) to further assess the possible cause of the mass or swelling.

If your doctor suspects a testicular cancer, they will usually order a scrotal ultrasound and may also test your blood for proteins or enzymes called tumor markers which, when found in high levels, can indicate cancer is present. Based on this information, your doctor may order Abdominal & Pelvic CT (<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/abdominct>) or Abdominal & Pelvic MRI. Biopsy is not recommended as it carries a risk of spreading the cancer cells. If cancer is confirmed, your doctor may use medical imaging to determine the stage of cancer and whether it has spread to other locations in the body.

How is a scrotal mass treated?

Treatment of a scrotal mass will depend on the underlying cause. Benign conditions may be treated with minimally invasive procedures, such as varicocele embolization (<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/varicocele>) . Injuries or infections may require

surgery and/or medication.

If cancer is found, chemotherapy (<http://www.radiologyinfo.org>) , radiation therapy (<http://www.radiologyinfo.org>) or surgery may be prescribed depending on the type and stage of the tumor. Surgical removal of the testicle may be required.

Which test, procedure or treatment is best for me?

- Newly Diagnosed Palpable Scrotal Abnormality (<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/acs-palpable-scrotal-abnormality>)

Disclaimer

This information is copied from the RadiologyInfo Web site (<http://www.radiologyinfo.org>) which is dedicated to providing the highest quality information. To ensure that, each section is reviewed by a physician with expertise in the area presented. All information contained in the Web site is further reviewed by an ACR (American College of Radiology) - RSNA (Radiological Society of North America) committee, comprising physicians with expertise in several radiologic areas.

However, it is not possible to assure that this Web site contains complete, up-to-date information on any particular subject. Therefore, ACR and RSNA make no representations or warranties about the suitability of this information for use for any particular purpose. All information is provided "as is" without express or implied warranty.

Please visit the RadiologyInfo Web site at <http://www.radiologyinfo.org> to view or download the latest information.

Note: Images may be shown for illustrative purposes. Do not attempt to draw conclusions or make diagnoses by comparing these images to other medical images, particularly your own. Only qualified physicians should interpret images; the radiologist is the physician expert trained in medical imaging.

Copyright

This material is copyrighted by either the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA), 820 Jorie Boulevard, Oak Brook, IL 60523-2251 or the American College of Radiology (ACR), 1891 Preston White Drive, Reston, VA 20191-4397. Commercial reproduction or multiple distribution by any traditional or electronically based reproduction/publication method is prohibited.

Copyright © 2026 Radiological Society of North America, Inc.