

# Information on Testicular Torsion for Parents and Carers

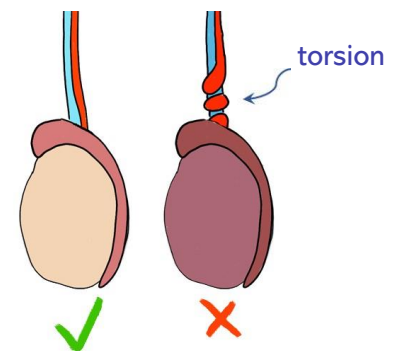
While most boys will not experience testicular torsion (there are around 1 in 4000 cases in boys/young men under 25 per year in the UK), damage caused by testicular torsion is the most common reason for a boy of school age to need to have a testis (testicle) removed. It is therefore important for parents, children and teachers to know about testicular torsion, how to recognize it and what to do about it.

## ***What is testicular torsion and why does it happen?***

A testis hangs off a cord containing blood vessels which supply the testis with oxygen and nutrients, and carry testosterone, made in the testis, out to the body. The cord also contains the sperm duct, which transports sperm from the testis to the penis.

The testis can twist or tort, causing the blood vessels and sperm duct to wrap around each other. If this happens,

**it is a surgical emergency, because the twist blocks blood flow which can lead to rapid death of the testis** (see diagram).



## ***What should be done about it?***

Testicular pain or swelling in any boy, teenager or young adult **must be regarded as torsion until proven otherwise**. Children should be encouraged to tell a parent or teacher as soon as possible if they experience testicular pain or swelling, or lower abdominal (tummy) pain, with or without nausea and/or vomiting.

**If the pain is severe**, it is important to **visit an emergency doctor as soon as possible, preferably in an A&E with surgical services on site** so the testis can be untwisted. If you have a nearby A&E with a paediatric (child) section, even better. Delayed treatment decreases the chance of saving the testis.

**If the pain doesn't seem severe**, it is important to **make a note of the time** when it was first noticed. If the testis is **still sore ONE HOUR after the pain started**, then assume it may be torsion and visit A & E as above.

## ***Some points to note:***

- If a boy or young man is experiencing testicular pain/swelling *together with* nausea/vomiting then testicular torsion is even more likely.
- In nearly a quarter of boys with torsion, abdominal pain happens before the testicular pain.
- Feeling sick (nausea) or vomiting is present in over 2/3 of patients with testicular torsion.
- Some boys are awakened from sleep by the onset of pain that was not noticed before sleep.
- There is usually no obvious cause for the pain: injury and recent exercise only leads to torsion in about 1 in 7 of those who develop the condition.
- Testicular torsion usually presents with testicular pain that happens suddenly but about 1 in 8 boys will experience a slower onset of pain and 1 in 20 do not describe any testicular pain at all, just abdominal pain.
- In **older** males, testicular torsion *should* always be considered with the above symptoms, although there may be other causes for the pain/nausea, such as infection.

***Please remember .....***

Testicular torsion can be difficult to identify as younger boys are often unable to accurately describe their pain. Testicular torsion may present with vague symptoms, sometimes in a manner similar to gastroenteritis. Therefore, it is sensible to consider testicular torsion as a possible cause in any young male with abdominal pain or vomiting. Seek help and let the doctors decide.

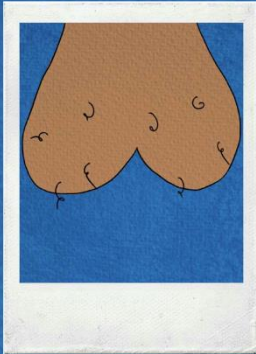
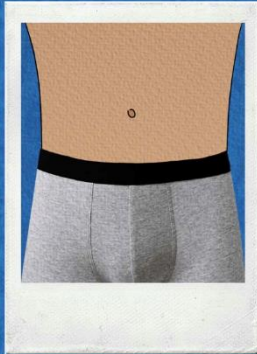


***What if my son has had the pain for several hours and has only just told me about it?  
Have we missed the chance of saving the testis?***



The “golden window” for successful treatment of testicular torsion is set at six-hours because the chances of saving a testis were thought to rapidly decline after six hours of torsion symptoms. However, recent research suggests that, depending on the tightness and number of twists, the testis may be able to survive longer than that.

Therefore, do not decrease the urgency of seeking emergency medical help **even if symptoms have persisted for several hours, there may still be an opportunity to save the testis.**

## **See a doctor and SAVE the BALL!**

<b>S</b> trong ongoing ball pain?	<b>A</b> bdomen (tummy) pains?	<b>V</b> omiting or nausea?	<b>E</b> ven aching during rest?
			



Scan here for more information on testicular health, or visit <https://www.testicularhealth.info/>