

Testicular cancer: What men need to know

Early detection is the key to successful treatment of testicular cancer. It is a good idea for men to check their testicles and scrotum for changes on a monthly basis.

Evaluate your risk

Any man can develop testicular cancer, although it is the most common type of cancer in young or middle-aged men. It occurs much more often in Caucasian men than in African-American men. Several other factors may increase your risk:

- **History of testicular cancer.** Having a father or a brother who had testicular cancer may raise your risk. Men who have had cancer in one testicle are at a higher risk for cancer in the other.
- **Undescended testicle.** In this condition, a testicle did not move down into the scrotum. Even men who have had surgery to place the testicle in the scrotum are at higher risk.
- **Klinefelter's syndrome.** This disorder, sometimes characterized by enlarged breasts, small testicles, and sterility, raises the risk of testicular cancer.

Steps for performing a self-exam

Following are the steps for performing a self-exam, which is best done after a warm bath or shower:

1. Cup one hand under your scrotum and feel for changes.
2. Place your index and middle fingers under the testicle with thumb on top.
3. Roll the testicle between your thumb and fingers, feeling for any lumps on the testicle. Spend about 30 seconds to one minute examining each testicle.
4. Repeat the above on the other testicle.

Testicles should feel firm and smooth. It is normal if one testicle is slightly larger than the other. But if you feel lumps or swelling, see your health care provider immediately.

