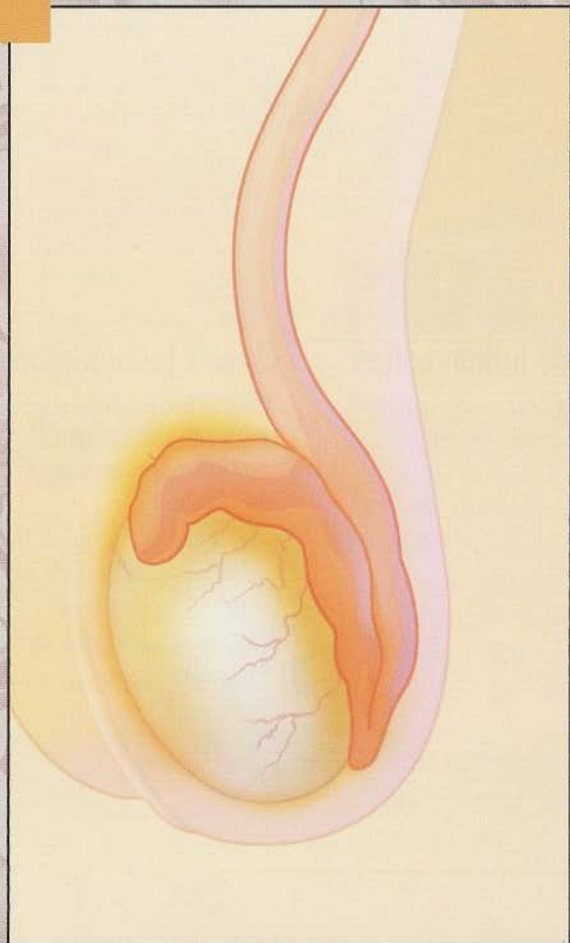


# EPIDIDYMITIS AND ORCHITIS

Common Inflammations  
in the Scrotum



# WHAT ARE EPIDIDYMITIS AND ORCHITIS?

**Epididymitis** is an inflammation of the epididymis. Inflammation is most often caused by bacteria in the urinary tract (a bladder infection) or by bacteria passed between partners during sex. It usually occurs in both tubes, and can be acute or chronic. When the inflammation spreads to a testicle, it is called **orchitis**.



## Acute Inflammation

This comes on quickly. Symptoms include:

- pain and swelling in the scrotum
- an urge to urinate often
- a discharge from the penis
- pain during ejaculation
- fever

## Chronic Inflammation

This is most often the late phase of an acute infection. Symptoms may include:

- an ache or dull pain in the scrotum, which may spread to the groin
- a heavy feeling in the scrotum

## What Inflammation Does NOT Mean

If you have epididymitis or orchitis:

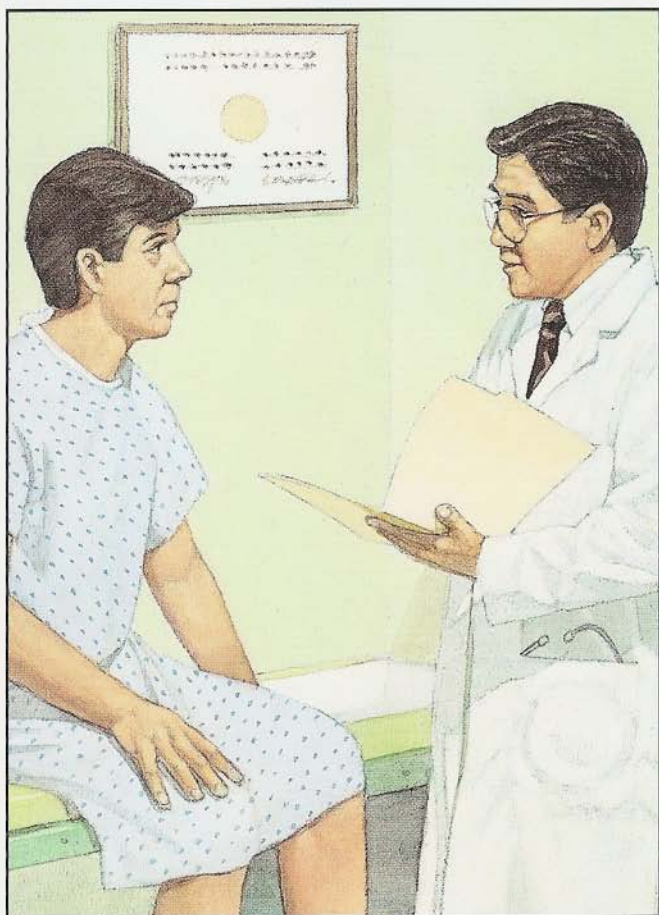
- It does **not** mean you are impotent.
- It does **not** mean you will be infertile once the infection clears up.
- It does **not** mean you have cancer or AIDS.

# EVALUATION AND TREATMENT

Your doctor diagnoses epididymitis through a physical exam and laboratory tests. Treatment includes medication to get rid of the infection, supporting the scrotum, and using ice packs can help reduce pain. If you are sexually active, any partners need to see a doctor.

## Physical Exam and Tests

During your physical, your doctor examines your testicles for swelling. Your urethra is checked for any discharge, and you will be asked to give a urine sample. The sample is sent to the lab to find out which bacteria are causing the inflammation. Sometimes a blood test is done. If your doctor finds a mass on a testicle, or a testicle feels twisted, an ultrasound may be ordered. This imaging test uses sound waves to create a picture of the inside of your scrotum.



cal exam and simple lab  
the bacteria. Resting,  
p relieve your symptoms.  
a doctor as well.



## Treatment

Treatment may include one or more of the following:

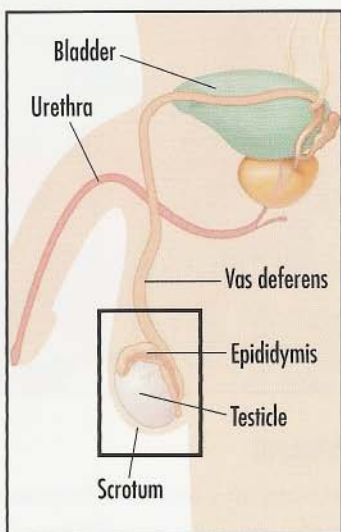
- **Antibiotics:** Acute epididymitis is most often treated with oral antibiotics. You may also be given an injection of antibiotics. Be sure to take all of your medication.
- **Anti-inflammatories:** Your doctor may prescribe medication to reduce swelling and tenderness.
- **Rest:** You will most likely need to rest for 3 to 4 days, or until the swelling and fever are gone. Lying down with a towel folded under the scrotum can help relieve discomfort.
- **Scrotum support:** If your testicles are swollen, you may want to wear an athletic support (jockstrap) or spandex bicycle shorts. This helps relieve your discomfort until the swelling goes down.
- **Ice and Heat:** Putting an ice pack on the scrotum can help decrease any swelling. Once the swelling is gone, sitting in a warm bath increases blood flow to the affected area.

# THE TESTICLE AND THE EPIDIDYMIS

The 2 **testicles** are the male sex organs that produce sperm and male hormones. The testicles lie inside the scrotum. Behind each testicle is a coiled tube called the **epididymis**. Sperm mature as they pass from the testicle through the epididymis.

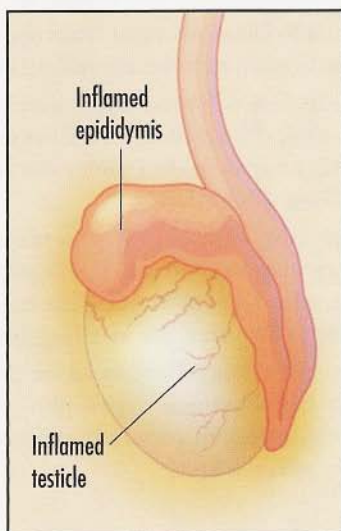
## Normal Flow of Sperm and Urine

Sperm travel from the testicle through the epididymis into a tube called the vas deferens. During ejaculation, sperm pass out of the body through the urethra. During urination, urine flows from the bladder out through the urethra.



## How Inflammation Starts

The urethra contains bacteria. Bacteria can travel from the urethra into the epididymis. This causes inflammation in the epididymis. The inflammation can also spread to the testicle. Sometimes infections, such as mumps, start elsewhere in the body and spread to the epididymis.



# AFTER TREATMENT

The inflammation will go away with treatment. But you may have an achy feeling in the testicles for several weeks or months. This does not mean the infection has come back. The testicles just take time to heal. If you feel a lump in a testicle after treatment, however, you need to see your doctor. Once the inflammation is gone, you should feel like being active again.



**Consultant:**  
Raul Hernandez, MD,  
Urology

This brochure is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Only your doctor can diagnose and treat a medical problem.

©1997, 1999, 2000, 2001 2012 Krames StayWell, LLC.  
All rights reserved. Made in the USA.

**KRAMES**  
staywell

[www.kramesstaywell.com](http://www.kramesstaywell.com) 800.333.3032