

Epididymo-orchitis

PATIENT INFORMATION

What is epididymo-orchitis?

Epididymo-orchitis is an infection of the testicle and epididymis (tubes around the testicle).

How does someone get epididymo-orchitis?

- Epididymo-orchitis is usually due to a sexually transmitted infection (STI) such as chlamydia or gonorrhoea, which is caught from having unprotected sex with someone who has the STI. This can include oral, vaginal and anal sex, sex play or sharing sex toys.
- If you use a condom every time you have sex you are much less likely to get epididymo-orchitis.
- Sometimes epididymo-orchitis is due to a urinary infection – this is more common in men over 35.
- It can also be caused by a childhood infection known as mumps.

What are the symptoms?

These can include:

- Pain or swelling in the testicle or scrotum.
- Discharge or fluid leaking from the penis, especially if it is due to chlamydia or gonorrhoea.
- Sometimes there may be pain passing urine.
- Sudden severe pain in the testicle or scrotum can be due to a twisted testicle. This is serious and you will need to see a doctor straight away.

What do I do if I think I have epididymo-orchitis?

You should see a doctor urgently. You will need to have a sexual health check. You will need an examination and you will need to do a urine test. You may also need to have a swab taken from the penis.

How do I get treated?

You will usually need an injection and a 2 week course of tablets. You will be advised to wear supportive underwear until it gets better. You may need painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen to manage pain.

Important advice

- Finish all the tablets you have been given, even if you feel better.
- You should use a condom while on treatment, so you don't pass the infection on to someone else.
- You need to tell anyone you have had sex with in the last 3 months to get a sexual health check and treatment as a contact of epididymo-orchitis even if their tests are normal.
- You should avoid sex for 2 weeks from the start of your treatment and until 1 week after your sexual contact/s have been treated. If this is not possible always use a condom, including for oral sex, until your treatment and your sexual contact/s treatment has been completed.
- We recommend you have another sexual health check in 3 months in case you get the infection again.

Important information

- Epididymo-orchitis is an infection of a male's testicle and tubes.
- It is usually caused by an STI, but can sometimes be caused by a urinary infection or mumps.
- If you get pain or swelling in the testicle you need to see a doctor urgently.
- It is treated by antibiotics.
- You need to tell anyone you have had sex with in the last 3 months to get a sexual health check and treatment as a contact of epididymo-orchitis.
- You should avoid sex or use condoms for 2 weeks from the start of your treatment and until 1 week after your sexual contact/s have been treated, so you don't pass the infection onto someone else.