

Testicular Self Exam Instructions

A testicular self-examination (TSE) is useful in the detection of cancer of the testicles. Testicular cancer is the most common solid tumor found in males age 20-34 years. If detected early and treated, testicular cancer is almost 100% curable. If untreated, it may spread to the lymph nodes and lungs. Tumors usually are found on 1 side, but 2-3% are found in both testicles.

Most doctors agree that examining a man's testicles should be part of a general physical exam. The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends a testicular exam by a doctor as part of a routine cancer-related check-up.

The ACS advises men to be aware of testicular cancer and to see a doctor right away if a lump is found. Because regular testicular self-exams have not been studied enough to show if they reduce the death rate from this cancer, the ACS does not recommend regular testicular self-exams for men. But if you have certain risk factors, such as undescended testicle, previous testicular cancer, or a family member who has had this cancer, you should think about doing monthly self-exams and talk about it with a doctor.

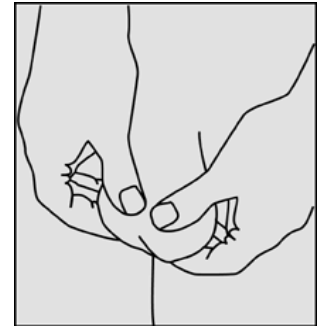
Still, some doctors think that noticing lumps early is an important factor in getting early treatment. They recommend that all men do monthly testicular self-exams after puberty.

Each man has to decide whether to do a monthly self-exam, so instructions for testicular exam are given here.

How to do testicular self-exam

The best time to do the self-exam is during or after a bath or shower, when the skin of the scrotum is relaxed. To do a testicular self-exam:

- Hold your penis out of the way and check one testicle at a time.
- Hold the testicle between your thumbs and fingers of both hands and roll it gently between your fingers.
- Look and feel for any hard lumps or smooth rounded bumps (nodules) or any change in the size, shape, or consistency of the testes.



You should know that each normal testis has an epididymis, which feels like a small "bump" on the upper or middle outer side of the testis. Normal testicles also contain blood vessels, supporting tissues, and tubes that conduct sperm. Other non-cancerous problems, such as hydroceles and varicoceles (described above), can sometimes cause swellings or lumpiness around a testicle. Some men may confuse these with cancer. If you have any doubts, see a doctor.

If you choose to check your testicles, you will learn to tell what is normal for you and what is different. Always report any changes to a doctor right away.

Sources and/or additional resources:

The Testicular Cancer Resource Center: <http://tcrc.acor.org/tcexam.html>

The American Cancer Society:

http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_2_3X_Do_I_Have_Testicular_Cancer.asp

Web MD: <http://men.webmd.com/testicular-examination-and-testicular-self-examination-tse>

If you are a registered Millersville University student and you have questions or you need to make an appointment, please call Millersville University Health Services at 871-5250.