

Let's Talk About...

Orchiopexy: Surgery for an undescended testicle

Orchiopexy (or-key-oh-PEX-ee) is a procedure that brings the testicle(s) into the scrotum.

Why does my child need an orchiopexy?

The testicles develop in the abdomen while a baby is in utero and usually move to the scrotum by 6 months old. Your child may need an orchiopexy if their testicle or testicles have not moved to the scrotum by this time. Surgically moving the testicles to the scrotum helps them develop normally and allows healthy growth for future sperm production.

What happens during an orchiopexy?

During an orchiopexy, your child will be put under general anesthesia. The surgeon will make two small openings in the groin and find the undescended testicle(s). They will make sure the testicle is healthy and then put it into the scrotum.

When can my child go home after an orchiopexy?

Your child can usually go home the same day as the orchiopexy. Watch your child carefully during the ride home to make sure their head and neck don't slump forward and close their airway.

When can my child eat after an orchiopexy?

After your child wakes up from surgery, they may have clear liquids like Pedialyte™, water, apple juice, sports drinks, ice pops, and plain gelatin. These are easy to digest. Most babies can take a bottle or breastfeed. Your child may eat a normal diet after leaving the hospital, but start with soft, easily digested foods. Avoid high-fat or greasy foods, like hamburgers and pizza, the first 24 hours after surgery.

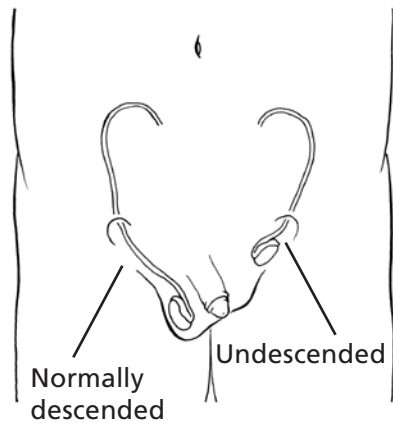


What should I do about nausea and vomiting?

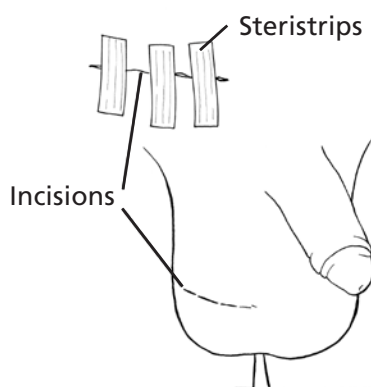
After surgery, many children feel nauseated and may vomit in the first 24 hours. This can be caused by medicines during surgery, car movement, or pain medicine after surgery. Help control nausea by:

- Encouraging your child to lie still
- Offering clear liquids, which are important after surgery to help prevent dehydration
- Slowly offering regular foods over a few days until your child can eat a normal diet

If your child vomits, let their stomach settle for 30–60 minutes and offer clear liquids. If your child vomits for several hours, call their healthcare provider for instructions. It may take 1–2 days before your child is interested in solid foods.



Undescended testicle



Undescended testicle repaired

What are the signs of dehydration?

Your child may be low on body fluids (dehydrated) after surgery. Signs of dehydration include:

- Dark yellow urine
- Dry mouth (no spit)
- Chapped lips
- Sinking soft spot on a baby's head

After surgery, encourage your child to urinate (pee) every 2–3 hours. Usually, normally voiding (peeing) resumes within 24 hours after surgery. A baby should have 6–8 wet diapers within a 24-hour period; an older child should pee every 3–4 hours.

How do I help my child manage pain after an orchiopexy?

To help your child manage pain, comfort them and listen to their concerns. Make your child as comfortable as possible to encourage healing. Talk to an older child about pain levels, and watch for signs of pain in a younger or developmentally delayed

child. A child in pain may moan, whimper, make a face of pain, cry, be irritable, be inactive, not eat, or not sleep.

What medicines does my child need?

You may give your child ibuprofen or acetaminophen (such as Tylenol®) 3 times a day for the first 48–72 hours after surgery unless the doctor says otherwise. You do not need to wake your child to keep the schedule. Your child's healthcare provider may prescribe a stronger medicine like oxycodone or hydrocodone. Most children will need the stronger pain medicine for 1–2 days, with over-the-counter medicines used in-between. Call your healthcare provider if your child has pain that is not controlled by medicine. If you need to call after hours, call the hospital and speak to the pediatric urology doctor on call.

How do I care for my child's incision(s)?

Your child may have an upper opening (incision) above the scrotum. If there is a bandage over the upper wound, remove it after 24 hours. The surgeon will often put surgical glue or Steri-Strips® over the upper incision. The surgical glue usually peels off by itself within a week, and the Steri-Strips® fall off 7–10 days after surgery. You can remove the strips when they start to peel up at the edges.

The surgeon will close the incisions with stitches under the skin. These stitches are dissolvable and should not be removed. You may help soften the stitches on the scrotum by putting a thin film of petroleum jelly on them daily for 7–10 days after surgery. This can help reduce the discomfort when stitches are dry and get caught on a diaper or underwear.

How much drainage is normal after an orchiopexy?

A small amount of fluid or bloody drainage is normal. If the incision is dripping blood, apply pressure with a clean washcloth for 10 minutes. If the bleeding does not stop, apply pressure again and call your child's doctor. Swelling around the incision and bruising and swelling through the scrotum are normal. The bruising, changes colors as it heals, and can last with scrotal swelling 2–3 weeks.

When can my child take a bath or shower?

Do not immerse your child in water for 24 hours after surgery. You can give your child a sponge bath with a warm, moist washcloth if needed. After 24 hours, let your child sit in warm bathwater 2 times a day the first week. This will keep the groin area clean and help reduce swelling.

What activities should my child avoid after an orchiopexy?

Anesthesia medicine can affect balance, so don't let your child do any activities that require balance the first day after surgery. This includes riding a bike, playing on playground equipment, and riding a scooter. Watch your child carefully if they are taking a narcotic medicine for pain, such as hydrocodone. These can make your child sleepy or dizzy.

Put your child in a car seat when driving and hold them often after surgery. Your child should avoid these activities or positions:

- Swimming for 2 weeks
- Playground activities or physical education for 2 weeks
- Contact sports for 3–4 weeks
- Straddle toys, like bicycle seats or baby walkers, for 3–4 weeks
- Trampolines and gymnastics for 3–4 weeks

What is normal behavior after an orchiopexy?

It is normal for your child's behavior to change after surgery. They may act like a younger child (bed wetting or acting out), change sleep and eating patterns, or have nightmares. Be patient. Most behavior changes last a few days to 2 weeks. Remember that your child's routine was upset by surgery and comfort them. If the behavior lasts longer than 4 weeks, call your child's doctor.

When should I schedule a follow-up appointment?

Your child should see their surgeon 4–6 weeks after surgery. However, if your child is due for a well-child visit or the surgeon approves, your child may have the follow-up check with their regular doctor. To schedule a follow-up appointment with the surgeon, call 801.662.5555 and select option 2.



When should I call my child's doctor?

If you are concerned about your child, call the urology office at 801.662.5555 and choose option 3. If the office is closed, call the operator at 801.662.1000 and ask them to page the on-call pediatric urology resident.

Call the doctor if your child has any of the following:

- Redness, pus, drainage, or persistent pain around the surgery site after 72 hours
- A fever higher than 102°F (mild fevers are normal)
- Active bleeding from the incision (apply pressure to the area for 10–15 minutes while you call)
- Signs of dehydration (not drinking, dry mouth, fewer than 6–8 wet diapers, reduced urine output, and lack of tears)
- Diarrhea or constipation for more than 2 days
- Increasing pain that doesn't stop with pain management

If your child has chest pain or trouble breathing, take them to the emergency room or call 911 immediately.

