

HERNIAS

When part of an organ or tissue in the body (such as a loop of intestine) pushes through an opening or weak spot in a muscle wall of the abdomen, it can protrude into a space where it does not belong. This protrusion is called a hernia, which may look like a bulge or lump. In many infant and childhood hernias, this tissues may protrude only during moments of physical pressure or strain. A prominent bulge might only be noticeable when a child is crying, coughing, or straining, and it may seem to retract or go away at other times.

CAUSES INCLUDE: A hernia can develop in the first few months after the baby is born because of the abnormal opening that persists between the scrotum and the abdomen called the inguinal canal. It should close by the time the child is born, but in many instances this only occurs after birth. In some children the passage never closes or re-opens again, and this leads to a hernia.

TREATMENT OPTIONS: Surgery, the herniated tissue is put back into its proper space, and the opening or weakness that permitted it to form is closed or repaired.

CYSTOSCOPY AND RETROGRADE PYELOGRAM

A retrograde pyelogram is an imaging test that uses X-rays to look at your bladder, ureters, and kidneys. The ureters are the long tubes that connect your kidneys to your bladder. This test is usually done during a procedure called a cystoscopy. It uses an endoscope, which is a long, flexible, lighted tube. Contrast (radiological dye) is injected via a small catheter into the ureter. As it fills, x-rays are taken in the operating theatre to look for any abnormality.

SYMPTOMS FOR WHICH THIS IS DONE

INCLUDE: Blood in the urine, assessment of urinary tract infections, difficulty passing urine, pain/bothersome urinary symptoms.

TESTICULAR TORSION

Testicular torsion occurs when the spermatic cord, which provides blood flow to the testicle, rotates and becomes twisted and obstructed. This brings blood to the scrotum and reduced blood flow which causes sudden and often severe pain and swelling.

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE: Sudden, severe pain in the scrotum, swelling of the scrotum, lumps in the scrotum, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting, frequent urination, fever.

CAUSES INCLUDE: Often occurs several hours after vigorous activity, after a minor injury to the testicles or while sleeping, cold temperature, rapid growth of the testicle during puberty.

TREATMENT OPTIONS: This is a urological emergency and should be operated immediately.

CONTACT

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UROLOGY AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH



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CIRCUMCISION

Boys are born with a sleeve of skin, called the foreskin, that covers the head (glans) of the penis. During a circumcision the foreskin is surgically removed exposing the glans of the penis. The surgery is done under general anaesthesia, which means the patient will be asleep during the surgery and usually the patient feels no pain and will have no memory of the procedure. The procedure may be done using stitches or in some cases glue to bring the two pieces of skin together. The affected area will be a little bruised and swollen for between 2 to 3 weeks, and urination may be painful for a few days.



HYPOSPADIAS

Hypospadias is a congenital condition in which the opening of the urethra is on the underside of the penis instead of at the tip. The urethra is the tube through which urine drains from the bladder and exits your body. A patient with hypospadias may also have a bent penis facing downwards, also called chordee, and the foreskin is also not completely formed around the glans (head) of the penis.

CAUSES INCLUDE: Genetics, fertility treatments, hormones, mother's age and weight, exposure to smoking/pesticides, premature births.

TREATMENT OPTIONS: Surgery.

URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS (UTI)

A UTI is a bacterial infection of the urinary bladder (cystitis), the kidneys (pyelonephritis), or both.

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE: Pain and urgency with urination, blood in the urine, abdominal/pelvic pain, fever, flank pain, vomiting, waking up at night a lot to go to the bathroom, bedwetting (even though the child is potty trained).

CAUSES INCLUDE: UTIs occur when the bacteria that come from skin or the area surrounding the perineum manage to get into the urinary tract and multiply. These bacteria then cause infections in the urinary tract. UTIs are more prevalent in girls as they have a shorter urethra than men.

TREATMENT OPTIONS: In children the management of UTIs is complex and underlying congenital abnormalities must be ruled out to make sure it is not the cause, especially if the infection recurs. Initial infection may be treated with antibiotics, but the chronic use of antibiotics is discouraged as this may lead to resistance.

PYELONEPHRITIS

Pyelonephritis is the medical term for a kidney infection. The most common cause of acute kidney infections in children is from a bacterial urinary tract infection (UTI) that has spread up from the bladder to the kidneys. The bacteria trigger inflammation and the kidneys respond by producing more urine, which leads to dehydration, but the bacteria may also enter the blood stream and lead to a condition called urosepsis, which is dangerous and needs to be treated urgently.

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE: Poor feeding/appetite, vomiting, diarrhoea, fever, stomach or lower back

pain, symptoms of urgency, frequency and pain with urination, strong and foul smelling urine, blood in the urine.

CAUSES INCLUDE: Bacteria that has entered into the urethra and travelled up through the bladder and ureters. Some medical conditions such as bladder dysfunction, bladder obstruction, neurogenic bladder or vesicoureteral reflux (VUR) along with conditions that require the use of catheters can also increase the chances of kidney infection and damage.

TREATMENT OPTIONS: Adequate hydration, oral antibiotics, use of painkillers, IV fluid replacement, parenteral antibiotics and severely ill or septic patients may require hospitalization for treatment.

UNDESCENDED TESTICLE

In the condition termed undescended testis, the testis is not in its usual position in the scrotum, and may be somewhere in the inguinal canal along the pathway of descent, or in severe cases may still be in the abdomen.

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE: Not seeing or feeling a testicle where you would expect it to be in the scrotum is the main sign of an undescended testicle.

CAUSES INCLUDE: Prematurity, hormonal disorders, spina bifida, retractile testes, testicular absence.

TREATMENT OPTIONS: Surgery to relocate the testicle to the scrotum and fix it into place to keep it in the correct position.