

TSE: *Testicular Self-Examination*

Although testicular cancer is rare, it is the most common cancer in men between the ages of 15 and 34 years. Delay in the diagnosis of testicular cancer is one of the greatest causes of cancer deaths among men in this age group.

With early detection and recent advances in chemotherapy, testicular cancer is one of the most easily cured cancers. Unfortunately, approximately 50 per cent of patients are diagnosed after the tumour has spread beyond the testes and into the lymph nodes in the abdomen or pelvis, or to other solid organs where the chances for cure are less certain. However, recent advances in chemotherapy have significantly improved the prognosis, even in patients with advanced testicular cancer.

The majority of patients with testicular cancer report having noticed symptoms related to the testes some time before the diagnosis was made.

There is a real need for young men to learn how to carry out testicular self-examination with the same regularity as women carry out breast self-examination. Both examinations are vital for early detection and the successful treatment of cancer.

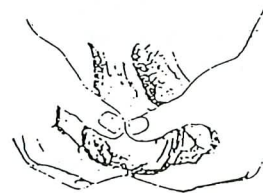
The causes of testicular cancer are not exactly known, although several factors have been implicated including cryptorchidism (undescended testicle), trauma (injury), heat exposure, and heredity.

SYMPTOMS:

The usual symptoms of testicular cancer includes a lump on the testicle, painless swelling, or a dull ache or heavy dragging sensation in the lower abdomen, groin or scrotum. Acute pain is uncommon unless the person is also suffering from epididymitis (an inflamed condition of the elongated mass attached to the upper part of the testis). The mildness of typical early symptoms combined with ignorance or fear of cancer may lead the young, otherwise healthy, male to delay seeking medical attention until the disease has spread to other parts of the body.

Young men need to be aware of the fact that testicular cancer is possible in their age group and TSE might be a life-saving health habit.

*Have you
examined
YOURS*



this month?

HOW TO DO TSE:

Testicular self-examination (TSE) is a simple procedure that all young men should learn to do. Examination is best done using two hands as illustrated.

- * Explore each testicle individually
- * Using both hands, gently roll the testicle between the thumbs and fingers. If pain is experienced, too much pressure is being applied.

The examination should be done at least once a month, preferably after a warm bath or shower when the scrotal skin is most relaxed.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

A normal testicle is egg-shaped, fairly firm to touch and should be smooth and free of lumps. When you examine the testicles you should look for any changes in the size or consistency. If you do find something abnormal, most likely it will be an area of firmness or small lump on the front or on the side of the testicle.

Do not confuse the epididymis (the soft tube-like structure at the back of the testis) with a tumour. If you do find something abnormal, you should see a doctor immediately.