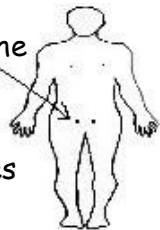
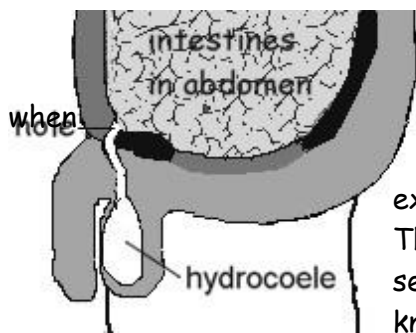
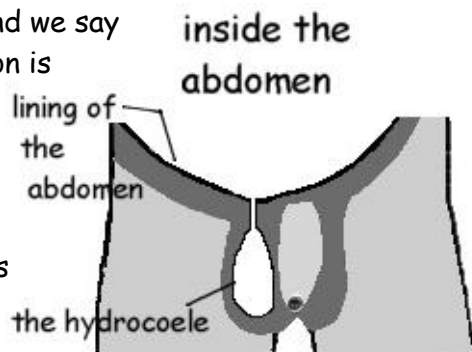


### **What is it?**

In the lower part of the abdomen there are two holes in the tummy muscles - one on either side. Through the holes come the blood vessels (and other things) to the testis. In some babies/children a balloon-like structure also comes through the hole. In that case, some of the fluid that is normally in the abdomen, can pass through the hole and fill the balloon.



You see a swelling around the testis and we say your child has a hydrocoele. The balloon is usually made of tissue paper thin material that looks like the lining of inside your mouth. Sometimes, the balloon is very thick. In this case it actually makes its own fluid. So there's fluid coming both from above and from the balloon itself!



### **How did my child get it?**

All baby boys have these balloons they are very tiny inside the womb. They're just an extension of the lining of the abdomen. The "blow-up" bit of the balloon usually seals off sometime before birth. We don't know exactly why it didn't do this in your

boy. We do know it had nothing to do with anything you or your partner did or didn't do during pregnancy or afterwards

### **Is it a problem?**

Yes and No.... It won't cause your child any medical problem but, if it's big enough, it can be a cosmetic problem.

### **What can be done?**

The balloon is not likely to seal off by itself once your child is 2 years old. If it is a cosmetic problem, surgery is the best choice. This is a very common operation. A small cut is made in a skin crease over the hole. The balloon is gently separated from the other structures (the blood vessels etc) coming through the hole and then closed off with a stitch. If the balloon is thick, we do another operation at the same time. To do this we usually (but not always!) need to make a separate incision (this time in the scrotum). We split the front of the balloon from top to bottom and fold it around the testis. This allows new tissues to develop which absorb the fluid. All cuts are closed with internal dissolving stitches. All you will see is the scratch(es) on the skin. The surgery is done under general anaesthetic, as a day stay.

### **What can I expect afterwards?**

Children set their own pace but most children will be back to normal by the next day. There may be some minor bruising or swelling around the cut and sometimes in the scrotum. This is from the operation itself and local anaesthetic that I put in the wound. I will give you a handout on what to do about pain, washing, eating, wound care and so on.

Possible risks include: infection in the wound; bleeding; a remote possibility of the hydrocoele coming back; damage to the blood vessels (resulting in the testis shrivelling up); damage to the vas (tube that carries sperm in later life); or finally the testis being pulled up into the groin by scar tissue. All of these things are remote with risks of 1% or less.

I will arrange follow-up with your local doctor or myself for about 4 weeks after the surgery.

JOHN CASSEY  
25/11/17

Why not use this page for notes and things to remember...

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# Hydrocoele

Dr John Cassey

General and Urological  
Paediatric Surgeon



23 Veronica St,  
CARDIFF NSW 2285  
Phone 02 49543888  
Fax 02 49565409  
[www.drjohncassey.net.au](http://www.drjohncassey.net.au)