

Introduction

A varicocele is enlarged veins (called the pampiniform plexus), mostly asymptomatic, inside scrotum. But some may cause pain, infertility and slow growth of the left testicle during puberty. Varicocele surgery involves blocking the blood flow to the pampiniform plexus.

The Procedure

The operation can be performed by laparoscopic or open approach under local or general anaesthesia.

Open Done through a single 1 inch cut, under a magnifying glass or operating microscope.

Laparoscopic Done through slim tubes put into your body through a small cut, under a special camera.

Preoperative Preparation

1. Admit 1 day before or on same day of this “elective” operation.
2. Anaesthetic assessment. Inform your doctors about drug allergy, your regular medications or other medical conditions.
3. Keep fast for 6 to 8 hours before operation.
4. Empty bladder and change to operation clothes before transfer to operating room.
5. Pre-medication, intravenous line and antibiotic prophylaxis may be required.
6. Shaving on the operation site may need as prescribed.

Postoperative Instruction

- General**
1. Mild throat discomfort or pain because of intubation.
 2. Mild discomfort or pain over the operation site. Inform nurse or doctor if pain severe.
 3. Nausea or vomiting are common; inform nurses if symptoms severe.
 4. Inform nurses if more analgesics are required.
 5. Can mobilize and get out of bed 6 hours after operation.

Wound care Keep the wound dry.

Diet Resume diet usually 4 hours after anaesthesia, when taking sips of water well.

Common Risks and Complications (not all possible complications are listed)

- Anesthesia related**
1. Cardiovascular: myocardial infarction or ischaemia, stroke, deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, etc.
 2. Respiratory: atelectasis, pneumonia, asthmatic attack, exacerbation of chronic obstructive airway disease.
 3. Allergic reaction and shock.

- Procedure related**
1. Infection.
 2. Bleeding.
 3. Varicocele remaining (persistence) or coming back (recurrence).
 4. Fluid forming around the testicle (hydrocele).
 5. Injury to the testicular artery.

Things to take note on discharge

1. Contact your doctor or a nearby Accident & Emergency Department if you find increasing pain or redness around the wound and discharge from the wound.
2. Take analgesics prescribed by your doctor if required.
3. The dressing must be kept clean and dry.
4. Can often return to work 1 or 2 days after surgery. Avoid exercise for 10 to 14 days.
5. Need to follow up with your urologist as schedule.
6. For surgery done for fertility problems, semen analysis is done 3 to 4 months later.

Remarks

This is general information only and the list of complications is not exhaustive. Other unforeseen complications may occasionally occur. In special patient groups, the actual risk may be different. For further information please contact your doctor. Evangel Hospital reserves the right to amend this leaflet without prior notice. We welcome suggestions or enquiries on the information provided in this leaflet. Please contact our Healthcare professionals so that we could follow up and make improvement.

Reference

Urology Care Foundation: “Varicoceles” (2022)
<http://urologyhealth.org/urologic-conditions/varicoceles/printable-version> (13-07-2023)