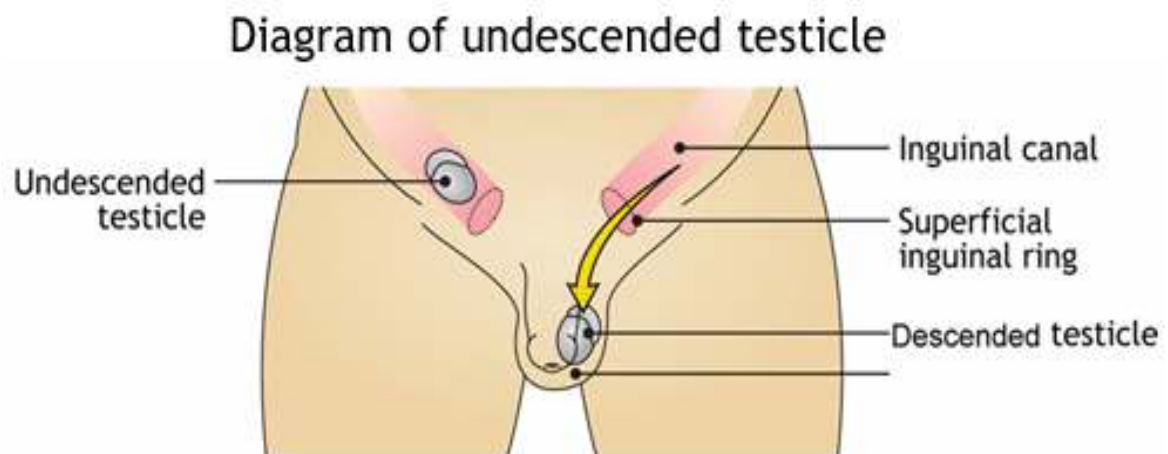


## UNDESCENDED TESTES

The testes in all boys develop within the abdomen and move down to the scrotum as they approach full-term development and birth. About 4 out of every 100 boys will not have testes within the scrotum when they are born. This is known as undescended testis or Cryptorchism.



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## CAUSES OF UNDESCENDED TESTES

The cause of most undescended testes is unknown.

Undescended testes are more common in premature boys.

Some hormonal and genetic disorders can cause undescended testes.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE TESTES DO NOT COME DOWN TO THE SCROTUM?

Undescended testes can be associated with an increased risk of;

- Trauma and twisting causing sudden pain
- Hernia – loops of bowel or fat from the abdomen coming through the same hole as the testes
- Lower fertility as the testes develop in a warmer part of the body than the scrotum
- Increased risk of testicular cancer, though this risk is still only 1 in 125
- Anxieties when boys get older that they look different from their friends.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN TESTES ARE NOT PRESENT?

**Don't worry!** In a lot of cases the testes will drop as your son gets older.

Your G.P. will examine your son again at 3 months. If the testes are still not felt in the scrotum, your doctor will refer you to Mr Owen Cole, Consultant Urologist at the Medical Specialist Group, who will see your son when he is 6 months old.

Mr Cole will discuss further management with you at this point. If the testis is felt in the inguinal canal (see above diagram), he will discuss an operation called an orchidopexy with you (see Orchidopexy information sheet) which will normally be performed when your son is 12 months old.

If the testes is not felt at all, or if both testes are felt but are very high in the inguinal canal, he may refer your son to Southampton as the operation to find the testis and bring it down may require more complex equipment and expertise.

## ACQUIRED UNDESCENDED TESTES

It is possible that your son had both testes present in the scrotum at his early check, and later in life one or both has risen and is now undescended. This usually occurs after the 1 year and you will be referred immediately for an opinion. And probable surgery.

## RETRACTILE TESTES

This occurs when the testes is not present in the scrotum but can be brought down to the scrotum on examination. This condition usually does not need an operation, but will often require follow-up examination every 6-12 months until the testes as dropped into the scrotum.

**This information has been prepared by Mr Owen Cole MBBS FRCS (Urol),  
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