Hydrocele/Hernia Repair for the Urology Patient

A hydrocele occurs when fluid collects in the scrotum and causes it to swell. This may or may not be present with a hernia. A hernia is present when bowel or a membrane known as omentum pushes through the abdominal wall either in or above the scrotum. A hydrocele/hernia may be on one or both sides. These conditions can occur when the opening between the abdomen and the scrotum do not close after birth.

How often do these conditions occur?
• 3-5% of full term infants have a hernia or hydrocele.
• Prematurity and low birth weight can increase the chance for a hernia or hydrocele.
• Hernias usually occur in newborns but may appear weeks, months or years after birth.

Hydroceles appear as swelling in the scrotum. It looks larger at the end of the day or with increased activity. Hernias appear as a bulge in the groin.
After the Operation
Your child will go home on the same day as his surgery.

Dressing
Your child will have an incision in his groin area. The incision may be covered with a Dermabond or a small dressing. Dermabond is a clear dressing that will fall off on its own. It does not need special care. Your child will have stitches underneath the skin. They will dissolve on their own.

Appearance
Scrotal swelling and black and blue discoloration is normal after the surgery. This will slowly go away over the next three weeks.

The incisions may feel lumpy after surgery; this is the “healing ridge”. It is normal. The incision will become smooth over the next six months.

If your child has bleeding that is soaking the dressing, apply gently pressure, not letting go, for 10 minutes. If he continues to bleed, call the urology office.

Diet
Your child can begin eating when he gets home. Start with clear liquids (apple juice, Popsicles, water ice). Add solid food slowly and in small amounts. Your child may vomit from the anesthesia on the day of surgery. This should stop by the morning after surgery. Call the urology office if he continues to vomit.

Bathing
Your child may take a bath or shower 24 hours after surgery.

Activity
Your child may not ride straddle toys (bikes, walkers, swings) for two full weeks after surgery. You should continue to use his car seat.
- Your surgeon will tell you when your child may swim in a pool.
- He may return to school when comfortable, usually within 3-5 days.
- Your surgeon will tell you when he may return to gym class or sports.
Pain Management after Urology Procedures

Your child may be in pain after surgery. Pain can be controlled. If your child is having pain, we will help him be as comfortable as possible. The hours following surgery can be a challenging time to manage pain. When your child wakes up in the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), he may not be in pain. During the procedure, the Urologist uses a medicine to numb the area around the surgical site. This medicine can be placed in two ways: directly on his skin or injected into the nerves around the surgical area. The numbness may last from several hours to 24 hours. When this medicine begins to wear off, your child may have a tingling or itching feeling around the surgery site. When this medicine completely wears off, your child may be uncomfortable and experience pain. This is normal.

Below is a list of medicines that your child may take after surgery:

- **Acetaminophen**
  - Pain reliever for mild to moderate pain.
  - For the first 3 days after surgery, give your child this medicine as prescribed.
  - After 3 days, only give this medicine to your child when needed.
  - Follow the dosage instructions on the label.

- **Ibuprofen**
  - Pain reliever to treat pain and swelling.
  - Ask your surgeon if your child is allowed to take ibuprofen.
  - For the first 3 days after surgery, give your child this medicine as prescribed.
  - After 3 days, only give this medicine to your child when needed.
  - Only give ibuprofen every 6 hours.
  - Follow the dosage instructions on the label.

You can alternate acetaminophen and ibuprofen for pain relief. Keep track of which medicine you gave and the time you gave it. You do not want to give too much of either medicine.

- The easiest way to remember is to give one medicine every three hours.
  - For example, if you give acetaminophen at 1:00PM, you can give ibuprofen at 4:00PM and then acetaminophen again at 7:00PM.
  - Caregivers will know what medicine is due next.

**Can my child have an allergic reaction to the medicine?**

- Yes! If your child has difficulty breathing or swelling of the lips or tongue, call 911.
- If your child has itching, hives, or a rash, stop the medicine and call your surgeon’s office.
Common side effects of medicines:

- **Nausea:** Some medicines make children feel sick to their stomach. To prevent this, have your child eat before taking the medicine. If he vomits after taking the medicine, do not give another dose until the next prescribed time.

- **Constipation:** Some medicines make it hard for children to have a bowel movement (poop). If your child does not have a bowel movement or is having difficulty, have him eat foods with fiber such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains. He should also drink lots of water.

If you cannot manage your child’s pain with acetaminophen and ibuprofen, call our office at 215-590-2754. Your child may need an opioid medicine for severe pain. Opioid medicine requires a prescription from your surgeon.

Risks of opioid medicine:

- **Addiction and overdose**
  - Risk is higher in people who suffer from a mental health disorder, or have a substance use disorder.
  - Do not take with benzodiazepines, alcohol or other medicines. This may decrease your child’s breathing.

Helpful tips to reduce pain:

- **Apply Ice**
  - Use as directed by your surgeon.
  - Use ice when your child is awake.
  - Do not place directly on your child’s skin.
    - Place a thin towel between his skin and the ice pack.
  - Use ice once an hour, for 15 minutes.
- **Make sure your child is in a comfortable position.**

Bowel Movements
Your child should have regular bowel movements. Give him juices, fruits, and vegetables to prevent straining. Do not let your child get constipated. If your child does not have a bowel movement 24 hours after surgery, you may give him a pediatric glycerin suppository. This is available over the counter without a prescription. Follow the directions on the label.

Post-op visit
After you return home, call the urology office to schedule follow-up appointment.

When to Call the Surgeon:

- If your child’s surgical site has green or yellow drainage, increased swelling or a foul odor.
- If your child has pain not relieved by pain medication.
- If your child has bleeding from the surgical site that does not stop with gentle pressure.
- If your child has a fever above 101.5°F by mouth or over 102.5°F rectally.
If you have any questions, call the Division of Urology:

- 215-590-2754 from 8:00AM to 5:00PM Monday through Friday.
- After 5:00PM Monday through Friday or on weekends, call 215-590-1000.
  - Ask the operator to page the on call Urology Physician.
- **Nights, Weekends, Holidays:** (215) 590-1000, ask the operator to page the on call Urology Physician.