Management of Undescended Testicles

Introduction

Purpose

Testicles are considered undescended when they fail to spontaneously migrate down into the scrotum after birth. Boys with bilateral, non-palpable testes, associated or not with hypospadias, require immediate consult of appropriate specialists, including Endocrinology, Urology, Gynecology and/or Genetics for evaluation of a possible disorder of sex development.

Target Users

- Nurses, nurse practitioners, staff physicians, residents, fellows, and primary care physicians

Target Patient Population

- Inclusion: Intended for boys 2 months of age or older who present with one testicle that is not palpable within the scrotum.
- Exclusion: Not intended for use in boys with bilateral undescended testicles.

Definitions

- Retractile testes: hypermobile testes; are descended testes that easily move back and forth between the scrotum and the abdomen. Retractile testes are normal testes that have been pulled into a suprascrotal position by the cremasteric reflex. These testes can be brought into a dependent scrotal position and will remain there if the cremasteric reflex is overcome.

Referrals

- Primary care physicians should refer boys two months of age or older who do not have spontaneous testicular descent to a surgical specialist for evaluation. It is expected that the testicles should descend by 6 months of age.
- Scrotal ultrasounds should not be completed prior to referral. These studies rarely have any impact on decision making.
- Retractile testicles do not need to be referred for surgical treatment however primary care physicians should assess the position of the testes annually to monitor for secondary ascent.
Clinical Recommendations

Management of Unilateral Undescended Testicles

Clinical Case

- Epic referral received and child meets clinic criteria for unilateral undescended testis: child must be ≥ 6 months of age

Clinic Criteria
- Unpalpable testicle within scrotum
- No ultrasound required as per Choosing Wisely

- Clinically determine testicular presence and location: retractile, ectopic, palpable, or unpalpable

- Is the testicle palpable? (groin vs. ectopic)

- Is the child between 6-18 months?

- Complete examine under anesthesia
  - Surgery to occur between 6-18 months of age
  - If ≥ 1 year, surgery to occur within 12 weeks

- If retractile, refer back to primary care provider
  - "Community practitioners to complete annual exam to ensure position

- Is the child ≥ 18 months?

- Surgery to occur between 6-18 months of age (inguinal/scrotal orchidopexy)
  - If child is high risk, book pre-anesthesia consult and admit as inpatient
  - Otherwise: same day surgery (1 stage orchidopexy) and discharge home from PACU

- If no palpable testicle

- Laparoscopic exploration

- Testicle found?

- Is testicle atrophied?

- If yes, remove atrophic testicle (orchiectomy)

- If no, proceed to 2 stage orchidopexy
  - Stage 2 is completed at least 6 months after stage 1

- If testicle is intraperitoneal

- Stage 1 orchidopexy

- Clinic follow-up appointment booked 3 months post surgery for atrophic testicle: primary care provider to refer to puberty for prosthesis text

Guideline Group and Reviewers

Guideline Group Membership:

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References


Attachments:

AAP orchidopexy.pdf
AUA guidelines orchidopexy.pdf
CUA-PUC guidelines.pdf
pathway_aug 9.pdf