

Penile Adhesions and Skin Bridging

Penile adhesions occur in circumcised males when the penile shaft skin attaches to the glans, or head of the penis. If not treated, penile adhesions may turn into a penile skin bridge. A skin bridge is skin that has permanently attached to the glans. They need to be removed because they can cause painful erections and may tether the penis as your child gets older.

Treatment

Your provider will discuss treatment options for your child. Penile adhesions are treated by separating the edges. Minor cases can be treated in the office. You may need a topical cream to slowly separate the edges at home. You will apply this cream two times daily for several weeks as you gently retract the skin.

Some children need a brief procedure under sedation to separate the skin. Penile skin bridges are treated with a small cut under a brief anesthetic. This procedure is done as an outpatient. If your child needs sedation, this will be done in our Pediatric Diagnostic Clinic.

What to Expect

Your child may have some tenderness, or pain. You may give over-the-counter acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen for pain.

Apply Vaseline ointment to the penis 3 times daily (or with each diaper change). Gently retract the foreskin each time after putting on the ointment.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concern.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 11/2020. University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#8172

Activity

Your child may return to his normal routine. Your child may shower or take a bath.

Follow-Up Care

Our nurse will contact you by phone or MyChart after about 2 weeks to check in. You may return for follow-up visit in person, if you prefer.

When to Call

- A fever over 101.5° F, for 2 readings, taken 4 hours apart
- Severe pain that doesn't go away with scheduled pain medicine
- Increased drainage or bleeding from the incision
- Questions or concerns

Who to Call

Pediatric Urology Clinic
Monday-Friday, 8 am-4:30 pm
608-263-6420 or 1-800-323-8942

After hours, weekends or holidays, your call will forward to the paging operator. Ask for the pediatric urology resident on call. Leave your name and number with area code. The doctor will call you back.