

Male reproductive system - quiz

What do you know about male fertility and the reproductive system? Test your knowledge with our quick health quiz.

1. What structures inside the penis are responsible for an erection?

- A. Columns of erectile tissue that fill with blood.
- B. A series of small bones that push out of the pelvic cavity and into the penis during arousal.
- C. Small balloon-like glands that fill with air.

2. Where is sperm made?

- A. In a special gland at the base of the penis.
- B. Inside a special series of tubes located within the pelvis.
- C. Within the testicles.

3. Why are the testicles kept outside of the body?

- A. The testicles cushion the penis and stop it from hanging too low.
- B. Earlier in human evolution, visible testicles helped males to sexually attract females.
- C. Cooler temperatures are important in the manufacture of sperm.

4. What is the most important male sex hormone?

- A. Oestrogen.
- B. Testosterone.
- C. Progesterone.

5. Which structures control the production of male sex hormones?

- A. The testicles, the pituitary gland, and the hypothalamus.
- B. The testicles, adrenal glands and the brain stem.
- C. The testicles, spinal cord and the cerebral cortex.

6. What does a typical sperm look like?

- A. A tadpole with a lashing tail.
- B. A ball covered in fine hairs.
- C. A slender rod with a corkscrew tail.

7. What is the seminal vesicle?

- A. The large blister that forms on the head of the penis after exposure to certain types of sexually transmitted diseases.
- B. One of the sex glands that adds nourishing fluid to the sperm.
- C. The first ejaculation ever experienced.

8. What is the name of the tube that carries both sperm and urine out of the penis?

- A. Fallopian tube.
- B. Epididymis.
- C. Urethra.

See over...

Male reproductive system - quiz answers

Correct answers

1. A.

The erectile tissue of the penis – on the upper side (called corpora cavernosa) looks like two rods running the length of penis – on the lower side is the corpus spongiosum, which ends in the glans penis. During sexual arousal, the nerves that supply the penis direct the small arteries, which supply the corpora cavernosa and corpus spongiosum, to open and fill this sponge like tissue with blood, causing the erection. Veins permit only the bare minimum of blood to return to the heart, just enough to maintain circulation.

2. C.

The testicles are small oval-shaped sex organs that produce sperm and sex hormones. These organs, sometimes called gonads, are housed outside the body in a skin-sack called the scrotum.

3. C.

Sperm production requires a temperature of around three degrees lower than the body, which is why the testicles are housed in the scrotum. The scrotum loses excess heat through its network of blood vessels. In cold conditions, the scrotum contracts to press the testicles against the body for warmth.

4. B.

Androgens are the hormones that make men 'male', and are responsible for sexual functioning, fertility and secondary sexual characteristics such as muscle mass and body hair. Testosterone is one of the most important androgens, and is produced in the testicles.

5. A.

The hypothalamus is an area of the brain that prompts the master gland of the body, the pituitary gland (which is also located in the brain) to send a chemical message to the testicles, instructing them to create hormones.

6. A.

The average sperm has a streamlined shape that looks a bit like a tadpole. It has a head that contains the genetic information, a short body, and a lashing tail that helps it to 'swim' through the female reproductive system.

7. B.

The accessory sex glands include the seminal vesicle, the prostate gland and the bulbo-urethral glands. Each one of these structures responds to testosterone and contributes fluids to nourish the sperm.

See over...



8. C.

The urethra is the tube that runs the length of the penis. It is attached to the bladder, to allow the passage of urine. The vas deferens is a structure of the male body that transports sperm to the urethra during ejaculation.

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