Mumps and swelling of the testes - Affect fertility? [1]

Dear Alice,

I have a question about mumps: I had mumps while I was thirteen-years-old. I remembered that because of embarrassment. I was afraid to tell my parents about the inflammation (swelling of the testicles) at the same time I had mumps. I did not have treatment for the swelling of my testicles due to mumps. Later, the swelling went away about the same time as my mumps. Although I still can produce semen, I am deeply disturbed whether that swelling could have hindered my fertility (i.e., no production of sperm due to the blockage of the sperm channels).

Concerned about the future

Answer

Dear Concerned about the future,

Mumps, which is an acute viral illness usually occurring in childhood and early adolescence, primarily causes inflammation and swelling of the salivary glands. However, in young men, mumps can also cause inflammation and swelling in one or both testes. This condition is called orchitis [2] and it develops in approximately 25 percent of all mumps cases in males. Orchitis usually affects one testis, making it tender and painful for about two to four days, and potentially resulting in shrinkage of the affected testis to smaller than normal size. In extremely rare cases, orchitis can lead to sterility, as the damage to the testes through inflammation can cause defective sperm. As this is a concern for you, you may want to undergo a semen analysis to determine the number, shape, and degree of motility (ability to move around) of your sperm. A health care provider should be able to perform this analysis for you, and if there did appear to be a fertility problem, you would be referred to a fertility specialist. Again, infertility resulting from orchitis is very rare.

Alice!

Category:
Sexual & Reproductive Health [3]
Men's Sexual Health [4]

Related questions

Measles [5]
How do I tell my girlfriend I'm sterile? [6]
Sarcoidosis [7]
Published date:
Mar 23, 1995
Last reviewed on:
Feb 26, 2014

Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.
If you are in an urgent situation, please visit our Emergency page to view a list of 24 hour support services and hotlines.

Source URL: http://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/mumps-and-swelling-testes-affect-fertility#comment-0

Links