
Understanding Straddle Injury

We understand that gender is a spectrum. We may use gendered terms to talk about anatomy and health risk. Please use this information in a way that works best for you and your provider as you talk about your care.

A straddle injury takes place in the groin area between the thighs. It can result from straddling a hard object. Or it can be caused by accidents, such as falling onto a bicycle crossbar.

The injury can cause damage to the area between the genitals and the anus (perineum) and the outer genitals. In women, this is the vulva. It includes the outer and inner labia and the clitoris. In men, this includes the scrotum, testes, and penis. The injury can also damage the tube that sends pee out of the body (urethra), especially for men.

The groin area will likely be bruised, bleeding, and painful. Severe injury can also break bones in the pelvis. Falling on a sharp object can cause more severe damage to the area and internal tissues, such as the vagina or rectum.

What causes straddle injury?

The injury can happen in many ways, such as a sports-related accident or falling while straddling any of these:

- Bicycle crossbar
- Fence or wall
- Gym equipment
- Edge of bathtub
- Arm of a couch or chair
- Diving board

Symptoms of straddle injury

- Pain
- Bruising
- Swelling
- Bleeding
- Trouble peeing, especially for men
- Upset stomach (nausea) or vomiting, if testicles are damaged
- Blood blister under the skin (hematoma)

Treatment for straddle injury

Treatments can include:

- **Bandage.** Your healthcare provider may put a bandage over any area that's bleeding. Keep the bandage clean and dry. Change it as often as instructed.
- **Cold compress.** This is a cloth wet with cold water or a cold pack from the refrigerator. It can help lessen swelling and pain. Wrap the cold pack with a thin, clean cloth. Don't put it directly on your skin. Use the cold compress on the area for 15 to 20 minutes. Do this several times a day for 2 to 3 days.
- **Sitz bath.** This means sitting in a shallow tub of warm water. You can do this in a bathtub. Or you can use a special basin that fits over the rim of a toilet.
- **Pain medicine.** You may be given prescription medicine to help ease pain. Or you may be told to take over-the-counter medicine. Take the medicine as instructed.
- **Suprapubic cystostomy.** This is a thin, flexible tube (catheter) put into your bladder through a small cut in your lower belly. It's used to drain pee while your urethra heals. A small plastic bag connects to the end of the tube to collect pee. The tube may be left in place for several weeks or longer.
- **Surgery.** In some cases, the provider will need to stitch cuts in the skin or fix torn internal areas. Your provider will give you more information if you need surgery.

Possible complications of straddle injury

- Infection
- Ongoing problems peeing and need for repair surgery
- Scar tissue

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your provider right away if you have any of these:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as advised
- Pain that gets worse or doesn't feel better with medicine
- Other symptoms that get worse or don't get better
- Trouble peeing
- Blood in your pee
- Other new symptoms