The Male Reproductive System – Class Notes

WHAT YOU’LL DO:
- Identify the parts of the male reproductive system.
- Summarize the path of sperm through the male reproductive system.
- Describe seven problems of the male reproductive system.
- Describe four ways to prevent common reproductive problems.

TERMS TO LEARN:
- Prostate
- Sperm
- Testes
- Testicles
- Seminiferous Tubules
- Genes
- Vas Deferens
- Seminal Vesicles
- Semen
- Prostate Gland
- Urethra

The Male Reproductive System:
Kyle heard his parents talking about his grandfather. His grandfather was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Kyle wondered what a prostate is and what it does. The prostate is a gland in the male reproductive system that makes fluid that helps carry male sex cells to the female’s body. Male sex cells are called sperm.

The Male Body:
The male reproductive system makes sperm. The testes, also called the testicles, are the organs that make sperm and the primary male sex hormone, testosterone. The testes are held by a sac of skin called the scrotum that hangs from the male body. The scrotum regulates the temperature of the testes so that sperm can form correctly. After leaving the testes, sperm mature in the epididymis. Then, the sperm are mixed with fluids made by other glands. These fluids carry the sperm out of the man’s body through the penis.

The Path Traveled by Sperm:
Sperm are made inside the testes in structures called seminiferous tubules. The cells in these tubules divide so that each new sperm cell contains half of the man’s genes. Genes are instructions for how a person’s body looks and functions. While the sperm are in the testis, they form the tail that allows them to swim. The ability to swim allows sperm to reach the sex cells of a woman. The immature sperm cells then move into the epididymis, where they mature.
When the sperm are fully mature, they move into tubes called the *vas deferens*. The vas deferens runs from each epididymis, out of the scrotum. They widen to form a storage area that is located just about the prostate gland. The two seminal vesicles are attached to the storage area of the vas deferens. The *seminal vesicles* are glands that produce most of the fluid that carries the sperm down the urethra and out of the penis. This fluid is called *semen*.

Below the seminal vesicles, the sperm pass through the *prostate gland* on their way to the urethra. As sperm pass through the prostate gland, the prostate gland and the Cowper’s glands add more fluids to the semen. The *urethra* is the tube that carries urine and sperm out of the body through the penis. After about two weeks in the man’s body, the sperm break down and are reabsorbed.

**Caring for the Male Body:**
Men and boy can protect themselves from reproductive health problems in the following ways:

- Bathe every day and keep skin clean and dry. Do not wear damp clothing any longer than is necessary.
- Always wear protective gear when playing sports that could cause testicular injury.
- See a doctor regularly, and report and unusual pain, swelling, tenderness, or lumps. Do regular testicular exams. Ask your doctor how to perform these exams.
- Abstain from sex before marriage to prevent catching sexually transmitted diseases.

**The Male Reproductive System:**
1. The ________________________________ is a gland the male reproductive system that makes fluid that helps carry male sex cells to the female’s body.

2. Define sperm.

**The Male Body:**
3. The ________________________________, also called the ________________________________, are organs that make sperm and the primary sex hormone, ________________________________.

4. The testes are held by a sac of skin called the ________________________________ that hangs from the male body.
5. The scrotum ___________________________ ___________________________.

6. After leaving the testes, sperm mature in the ___________________________.

7. Then, ___________________________ ___________________________.

8. These fluids carry the ___________________________.

9. **The Path Traveled by Sperm:**
   - Sperm are made inside the testes in structures called _________________.

10. Define genes.

11. While the sperm are in the testes, ___________________________.

12. The immature sperm cells then move ___________________________.

13. ___________________________, they move into tubes called the _________________.


15. Name the two glands that add fluid to the sperm.
   a. 
   b. 

17. After about two weeks in the man’s body, ________________________________.

**Caring for the Male Body:**

18. Men and boys can protect themselves from reproductive health problems in the following four ways:
   
   a. ____________________________________________________________

   b. ____________________________________________________________

   c. ____________________________________________________________

   d. ____________________________________________________________