

EXAMINE YOUR TESTICLES EVERY MONTH

Testicular cancer is the most common form of cancer in men under 35. Almost all men can be cured if treated early.

WARNING SIGNS INCLUDE:

- a hard lump (about the size of a pea) on a testicle
- slight enlargement of a testicle
- a change in the consistency of the testicles
- a heavy feeling in the testicles
- a dull ache in the groin or lower abdomen
- a pain, swelling or discomfort in the testicles or scrotum
- a sore on the tip of the penis that irritates or won't heal.

SELF EXAMINATION IS SIMPLE

It only takes a few minutes to examine your testicles.

- Know what your testicles feel like normally (smooth, firm and approximately the same size)
- Gently roll each testicle between the thumb and fingers of both hands
- Feel for a small lump on the testicles. Don't confuse the epididymis (a cordlike structure on the top and back of the testicle) with an abnormal lump.

OTHER SIGNS TO WATCH FOR INCLUDE:

- a persistent cough
- stomach and bowel problems
- difficulty passing urine
- an odd or new mole, spot or lump



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MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to raise awareness and change the stigma associated with men's health issues with a focus on testicular cancer. We aim to do this through educational programmes and opportunities for the youth of our community to help shape a generation of children who are self-aware about their health and wellbeing.

OUR VISION

To change the way testicular cancer is diagnosed by implementing best practice diagnostic guidelines for patients who present with testicular symptoms.

To arm future generations of young men with the necessary knowledge about testicular cancer that will enable them to be confident when taking health matters into their own hand.

OUR GOALS

1. Drive the SELF-AWARENESS campaign for the early detection of testicular cancer
2. Focus on youth EDUCATION through various teaching programme's aligned to national curriculum
3. Partnering with the community to promote the changes needed for increased male awareness and openness towards discussing their health matters
4. Collaborating with governing bodies to foster a best practice mentality for the early detection of testicular cancer.

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Dylan's Story

Dylan was raised in Perth, Western Australia and being Dylan meant that he never went anywhere without a ball. He went to the playground with a ball, into the bath with a ball and even to sleep with a ball.

On 21 February 1996, Dylan's brother Taylor entered the world and they became inseparable. At five years of age, Dylan played his first competitive match for Wembley Downs Soccer Club and never looked back.

In the close season he would try sports such as basketball, cricket, tee-ball, tennis and indoor soccer, with his brother, Taylor, never too far behind. At the age of eleven, Dylan moved to Stirling Lions and played there for one season before joining Perth SC.

In 2007, Dylan and his family moved to live in Macau and the football continued, although it was nothing like back home. He trained on grass pitches, on artificial pitches with older boys and men, in cages on concrete and even on roof tops. He had a hunger for the game and every weekend both Taylor and Dylan would sail to Hong Kong to train on Friday night, play Saturday mornings and train on Saturday afternoon before returning back to Macau.

In 2008, Dylan joined West Ham United and he flourished. He scored many goals in the Under 16s and quickly found himself playing in the Under 18s, the reserves, and finally in and around the first team.

Dylan proudly spent his 17th birthday with the first team in Portugal where he won the crossbar challenge and made a commercial. He returned to England and continued to shine.

In April 2011, at the age of 17, Dylan found a lump in his testicle. He didn't say anything straight away because he felt no pain or discomfort. He was playing so much football that when he did start to feel pain he put it down to all his exercise. When the discomfort became a little more consistent Dylan visited his General Practitioner. His GP informed Dylan that he had a cyst and that there was nothing to worry about as many people live with cysts. So Dylan continued on with his feeling of being on top of the world – by firstly finishing the Barclays Premier League season on the bench against Sunderland on 22 May. He then travelled to Australia four days later to join up with his Aussie teammates to prepare for the Under-17 World Cup in Mexico.

While in Mexico, Dylan caught the eye of Nike and he was offered a five-year contract. However, following the last game of the tournament for Australia, Dylan had a random drugs test and the results came back positive for a tumour. Dylan was finally diagnosed with testicular cancer ± three months after his initial GP consultation. Dylan fought very hard to maintain his fitness and strength while going through chemotherapy. He amazed everyone with his determination and his constant smile and banter. He once described himself as the happiest kid with cancer, but his cancer would not go away.

Every time Dylan had treatment, the tumour would return within six-eight weeks. It returned stronger and more resilient than before.

In January 2012, he had RPLND (Retroperitoneal lymph node dissection) surgery to remove his lymph nodes, but by June his cancer returned.

Amid Dylan's brave battle came his brightest day, his senior West Ham United debut on 25 September 2012. Dylan replaced Gary O'Neil in the 84th minute of a third round Capital One Cup tie with Wigan Athletic. Though the Hammers lost 4-1, it was a moment that Dylan would never forget. The culmination of a life-time's determination and desire, a dream come true.

In December 2012, Dylan had high dose chemotherapy and stem cell transplant twice within eight weeks.

In March 2013, Dylan was preparing for the Under-20 World Cup and his cancer resurfaced in his liver and he had to have his liver resected and was out for the next three months.

During this time Dylan went into the Club every day and worked on his banter, snooker and the exercise bike. He continued to do mild exercise until he was allowed to do more physical training.

Dylan had a couple of minor procedures throughout July – October and in November 2013 Dylan's cancer returned again. He was determined to have his three-week course of Chemotherapy and be fit for the Under-22 tournament in Oman in January 2014. Dylan completed his course of chemotherapy and played for Australia in January just three weeks later. But by the time he returned he was informed the cancer had not responded to the treatment and the doctors said that they could no longer offer Dylan a cure. Dylan travelled to Germany where they offered hope and treatments not available in the UK. Dylan stayed strong throughout his next phase of treatment but Dylan's cancer was rare and he had had so much chemotherapy that they were worried that his organs would fail.

On 18 April 2014, Dylan's organs failed and we said goodbye to our beloved son and brother. His West Ham family thought so highly of him they retired his number 38 shirt. It breaks our heart to think that this could have been prevented. If we had known about testicular cancer and what we needed to do to catch it early, we would have insisted on an ultra sound when we went to the GP. Dylan was robbed of a future that he dreamed of as a young boy. It robbed Taylor of a brother and it robbed my husband and I of watching our beautiful son grow and fulfil his dreams. Please do not let this happen to your son, brother, friend or father.

If you have a concern with your testicles please see a doctor straight away and insist on an ultrasound – it may just save your life.

We miss you so much Dylan.

You have left a void that no one can fill.

TRACY TOMBIDES

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