The male reproductive and sexual anatomy includes the external and internal sex organs, such as the penis and testes, and the internal reproductive organs, such as the urethra and seminal vesicle. The male reproductive system produces hormones, which help a boy develop into a sexually mature man during puberty. Males also use these organs to produce and release semen into the vagina during sexual intercourse where it can fertilise an egg.

Male reproductive organs

Organ	Description	Function
Testes	Egg shaped organs that sit outside of the body in a soft pouch called the scrotum	Produce sperm
Scrotum	A sac of skin that contains the testes	Helps to regulate the temperature of the testicles to 36.8 °C which is slightly less than the body's core temperature
Epididymis	Tightly coiled tube inside the testes	Sperm travel from testes to the epididymis where they mature - grow tails and are able to swim
Sperm duct (vas deferens)	The tubes coming out of each epididymis	During ejaculation, mature sperm travel from the epididymis along the sperm duct to the seminal vesicles
Seminal vesicle	Sac like gland that merges with vas deferens; 5 x 10 cm	Contributes 60% of seminal fluid which contains energy for the sperm in the form of fructose
Prostate gland	Gland at base of the bladder	Produces alkaline fluid, contributes 10-30% of seminal fluid
Cowper's gland	Small gland beneath prostate gland	Releases neutralising (pre-ejaculate) fluid to counter any traces of acidic urine still present in the urethra
Urethra	Tube running internally from bladder to penis and outside the body	Tube through which urine and semen pass to outside of body Semen and urine cannot exit the body at the same time

Organ	Description	Function
Penis	Consists of the shaft or body and the head or glans Is made of spongy tissue that grows and expands when filled with blood during an erection The head is highly sensitive, containing a massive number of nerve endings and is covered with a protective foreskin	Passage of urine and sperm outside the body Sexual pleasure

Relevant resources

Illustrations

Male reproductive system

Fact sheets/booklets/videos

Puberty booklet

This Background Note relates to the following Learning Activities:

- Reproductive systems
- Reproductive systems revision