

The Male Reproductive System

Puzzle – Answer Key

With your group, correctly fill in the blanks in the description of the male reproductive system below. Use each word from the vocabulary list only once. Use the bolded words to correctly fill in the blanks in the male anatomy illustration below.

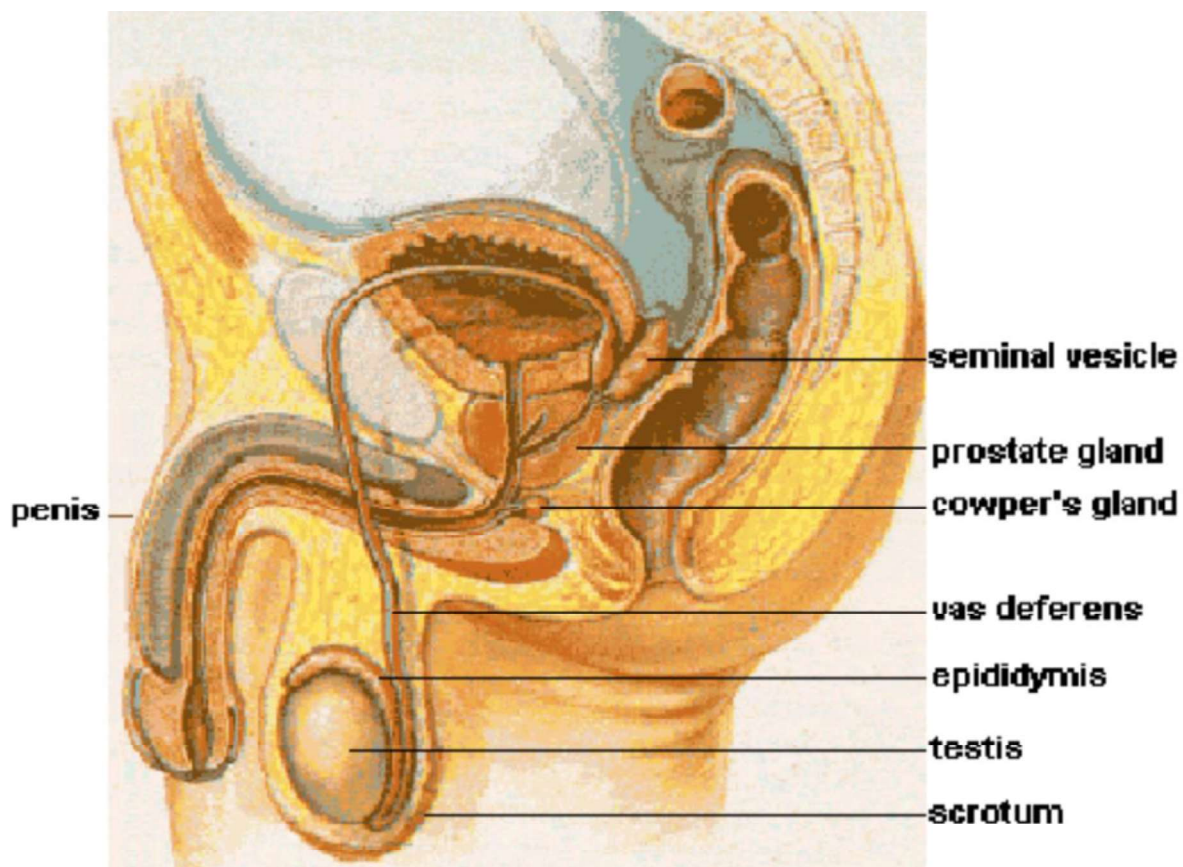
cowper's gland	erection	scrotum	testes
chromosomes	penis	semen	testosterone
ejaculation	prostate gland	seminal vesicle	urethra
epididymis	puberty	sperm	vas deferens

One function of the male reproductive system is the production of sex hormones, the primary one being **testosterone**. Like the female sex hormone (estrogen) this is responsible for developing sex organs. It kicks in at **puberty** and generates the production of sperm while causing some secondary characteristics, such as facial hair and a deeper voice.

A second function of the male reproductive system is the production of male sex cells called **sperm**, which occurs in the **seminiferous tubules** of the **testes**. These oval-shaped glands are protected by a pouch of skin called the **scrotum**. Its purpose is to protect the testes, which are located outside the body, so that they keep the sperm at a cooler temperature, thus making the sperm more viable. Like the female egg, sperm have 23 **chromosomes**. When sperm and egg unite and the egg is fertilized, they form a cell with 46 chromosomes.

Next to the testes is a series of coiled tubes, call the **epididymis**. This is where the sperm are stored and allowed to mature. Leading from the epididymis is the **vas deferens**. During **ejaculation** or orgasm, the walls of this structure contract reflexively, propelling the sperm forward. The sperm moves from the vas deferens to the **urethra**, the tube that leads outside of the body and which carries both urine and semen. Along the way, sperm are nourished by a sugary fluid from the **seminal vesicle**, a chemical fluid from the **prostate gland**, and fluid from the **Cowper's gland**, which are two small glands near the bladder. These fluids combine with the sperm to form **semen**, which is carried to the external male reproductive organ, the **penis**. Before a male can

ejaculate, the spongy tissue surrounding the penis becomes engorged with blood, causing the penis to become stiff. This is known as an **erection**.



Sternberg, Elf (2003). *File:Male anatomy.png*. Retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Male_anatomy.png