

# Bladder Exstrophy

## What is it?

Bladder exstrophy (pronounced EK-stroh-fee) is a rare birth defect of the bladder and areas around it. Normally, the bladder is round and inside the body. In babies with **bladder exstrophy**, the bladder is flattened, turned inside out, and outside the body. The skin, muscle, and hip bones at the lower part of the belly are not joined, allowing the bladder to be outside the body. The bladder will not be able to store urine. Babies with bladder exstrophy will also have a condition called vesicoureteral reflux, which means urine flows the wrong way.

## How common is it?

Approximately 1 out of every 50,000 children are born with it each year. It is more common in boys than girls.

## What causes it?

The cause of bladder exstrophy for most babies is unknown. There may be many factors that cause it. More research is needed to understand the exact cause.

## How is it diagnosed?

It is often diagnosed during pregnancy by screening tests. The doctor will be able to see that the bladder did not form correctly. Sometimes it is diagnosed after birth. Doctors will be able to see the bladder on the outside of the body right away.

## How is it treated?

Bladder exstrophy is treated surgically. Several surgical treatment options are available, with the type of surgery depending on the severity of the condition. The goals of treatment are to put the bladder inside the body and make the bladder and kidneys function correctly. Your child's doctor should discuss appropriate treatment options with you.

### For more information:

Mayo Clinic

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/bladder-exstrophy/symptoms-causes/syc-20391299>

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

<http://www.chop.edu/conditions-diseases/bladder-exstrophy>