

Varicocele may be unilateral or bilateral,² may be primary or secondary, that is idiopathic or symptomatic, may be complicated by the co-existence of other local pathological states, hernia, vaginal hydrocele, tumors of spermatic cord, etc., may be associated with a fully developed or with an undeveloped testicle.³ In Gould's cases,³ the testicles were small but not wasted. The following varieties are recognized:

(a) Simple dilatation and varicosity of the veins with or without slight scrotal relaxation.

(b) Orchidoptosis.

(c) Varicosities and orchidoptosis.

All authors state that the left side only is involved in by far the larger number of cases (80% to 90%, Chassaignac, Dardignac (4, 5), 92%, Istomin 5a). Clinical observation amply confirms this statement.

Statistics are not in accord as to the frequency of the condition. Senn,² in 9815 recruits examined, found varicocele present 2078 times, that is in 2117%. In 15 of these cases the affection occurred on the right side; in 17 it was bilateral, in the remaining cases the left spermatic cord was the seat of trouble. French military commissions report varicocele as occurring in 6.4% of all recruits. No age is exempt. Though it occurs in all ages, it is rare both in the young (6a and b) and in the old. Gould³ had a case of varicocele occurring in a boy, four years old, and another case in a boy eleven years old. Its period of greatest incidence is between the ages of 20 and 40. Landouzy³ gives the following table:

In 13 cases the varicocele was first noted between 9 and 15 years
" 29 " " " " " " " 15 " 25 "
" 3 " " " " " " " 25 " 35 "

Curling⁷ gives the following statistics: "

2 cases were between 10 and 15 years when they came under medical notice
28 " " 15 " 25 " " " " "
14 " " 25 " 35 " " " " "
5 " " 35 " 45 " " " " "
3 " " 45 " 65 " " " " "

No race is immune. It has, however, been observed that negroes are practically free from varicocele. In them, the