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## JOURNAL ARTICLE

# Seminiferous tubule degeneration in human cryptorchid testes

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Two types of degenerating seminiferous tubules were found in cryptorchid testes with Sertoli cell hyperplasia of children and adults: 1) tubules with central degeneration, and 2) tubules with total degeneration. Central degeneration begins with degenerative changes in germ cells that accumulate in the lumen of the seminiferous tubule. Some Sertoli cells may also be affected. Degenerated cells finally disappear, and the remaining tubule is composed of only a cuboidal epithelium, which consists mainly of Sertoli cells and

occasional germ cells surrounding a wide lumen. Total degeneration is principally seen in tubules with severe germinal hypoplasia. All the seminiferous epithelium cells degenerate and lose their characteristic distribution, forming a disorganized Sertoli cell nodule surrounded by a thickened basement membrane. Lastly, Sertoli cells disintegrate, and the seminiferous epithelium disappears. Tubular degeneration might be related to the thickening of the basement membrane, which hinders metabolic interchange between the seminiferous epithelium and the interstitium.

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