



**Unlocking
Common ED
Procedures**

Penile Zipper Injuries and Entrapment

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✓ Penile zipper injury

- Determine if the penis is stuck in the sliding mechanism of the zipper or between the teeth.
- Give appropriate analgesia. Great options if patient is without an IV include topical as well as intranasal agents. Penile dorsal nerve block is also a very effective tool.
- If the penis is caught between the teeth, cut across the entire zipper either above or below (preferred and usually easier) the tissue. The zipper teeth should then come apart easily and free the tissue.
- If the penis is caught within the sliding mechanism, multiple modalities should be attempted. This type of zipper injury is much more difficult to relieve and analgesia should thoroughly be addressed. Depending on the patient agitation, they may even require procedural sedation to allow for effective liberation techniques.
- First start with mineral oil or soap and water and try to pull the tissue from the sliding mechanism gently. If this is not successful, attempt to cut the median bar of the zipper with bone or bolt cutters. If you can cut completely through the median bar, the anterior and posterior faceplates will no longer be connected and the zipper can easily be pulled apart. You can also attempt to wedge a screwdriver between the anterior and posterior faceplates and rotate 90 degrees. This should either open up the space between the faceplates enough to pull out the trapped skin or completely disengage the sliding mechanism from the zipper teeth.
- If unable to have success with any method of penile liberation, patient will require urology consultation for possible surgical intervention and/or circumcision.

✓ Penile strangulation

- Examine the patient and assess for signs of ischemia. Realize that they may have waited a long time to come in due to fear of embarrassment and may not be forthcoming with duration of injury. If any signs of ischemia are suspected, consult with urology immediately prior to attempts to remove in the ED.
- Multiple methods may be used to remove the penis ring. Attempt lubrication and gentle traction first.
- If unsuccessful, consider the string method presented in the video above.
- If attempts are still unsuccessful, patient will need intervention with heavier tools, start first by utilizing your department's ring cutter. Remember to give appropriate analgesia and at this point, procedural sedation should also be considered due to the anxiety of the situation. Pour ice water during any attempts to cut the ring off to prevent iatrogenic burns.
- If strong enough machines are not available in the ED, the patient may need to go to the OR for use of surgical grade saws and grinders. Also consider calling local fire department to source removal tools.
- Consider antibiotics, particularly if patient is febrile, has signs of ischemia, or appears septic. Also update tetanus if necessary.



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