"THE LONG AND WINDING TUBULE!"

The information that follows should be useful in preparing for the third hour exam in human anatomy.

The spermatozoa (one is named Spermit!) begin their existence in the **seminiferous tubules** where they are formed as the result of a process called meiosis. This process results in cells that have half the normal number of chromosomes (23 instead of 46 in humans.) At this point the spermatozoa do not have a flagellum, but all that develops in good time.

They move to the **rete testes** next, and then on to the **vas efferens** (**efferentia**.) These first three structures are all found in the testicle itself.

The vas efferens pass into the head of the **epididymis**. The spermatozoa normally spend about 20 days in the epididymis and during that stay they develop a flagellum.

Upon ejaculation they move into the **vas deferens**. This duct courses through the spermatic cord to the external inguinal ring, through the inguinal canal, over the ureter (to grandmother’s house – oh no – that is a song – sorry) along the posterior side of the urinary bladder.

There the vas deferens is joined by the seminal duct – the resulting structure is the **ejaculatory duct** (quack). The spermatozoa have been joined by the seminal fluids (more on this in lecture).

The ejaculatory duct passes into and through the prostate gland. Its contents are delivered to the **urethra** (named for the none other than Lady Soul – Urethra Franklin.)

In the urethra more fluids from the prostate gland, and later the bulbourethral glands (named for the famous Hobbit – Bulbo Baggins) are added to the mass that is now called semen. The semen passes out of the male urethra and is normally deposited in the **vagina**.

At this point the spermatozoa are on their own and they swim through the **cervix**, the **uterus**, and into the **uterine tube** (oviduct or fallopian tube.)

Fertilization usually occurs in the **distal third of the oviduct**.

More details of "**The Long and Winding Tubule**" will be covered in lecture or lab.