

Vasectomy 101



What is a Vasectomy?

Vasectomy may be the safest, most effective kind of birth control. It is a minor surgical procedure performed in our clinic. Sections of the tubes carrying sperm from the testicles to the penis are removed. After a period of time, the male's ejaculate will no longer contain sperm.

How do I schedule a vasectomy?

Education about the procedure is very important. Once a man knows he does not want to father any more children, he will attend a formal counseling session with a physician. After all questions are answered and a screening exam is completed, an appointment will be scheduled.

ANATOMY 101

Testicles produce both testosterone and sperm.

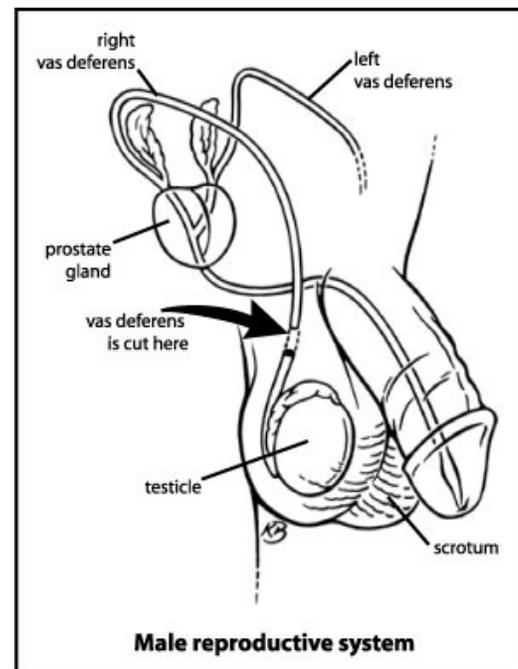
Testosterone is a hormone that is released directly into the blood stream. Sperm is what joins the egg to make a baby. It is carried through a tube, called the vas deferens, up through the groin, past the seminal vesicles and prostate and enters the urethra (opening at the end of the penis). Sperm only makes up a fraction of the ejaculate. The great majority of ejaculate is from fluid ejected into the vas deferens by the seminal vesicles.

A vasectomy disrupts the tube carrying the sperm, the vas deferens.

Although sperm is still produced after a vasectomy, it has no way to make it to the urethra. The sperm that is produced is reabsorbed by the body.

The testicles still produce testosterone after a vasectomy.

Since your blood vessels are unaffected by the procedure, you will maintain your existing level of hormone.



How is a vasectomy performed?

The vasectomy technique may vary from provider to provider and will take 20-30 minutes. The patient is awake but has the option of taking an anti-anxiety medicine prior to the procedure. After an injection of local anesthetic, a small incision is made in the scrotum. Part of the vas deferens is pulled through the opening. A small section of the vas deferens is removed. The ends of the vas deferens may be stitched shut or burnt. This process is repeated on the other side. The incision(s) may be closed or left open depending on technique. "Post-op" care will be explained by the physician, and a reminder sheet will be provided after the procedure. The patient is strongly encouraged to remain inactive for two to three days and have limited physical activity for two weeks. Post-operatively, prescription pain medication will vary from provider to provider.

Is a vasectomy the right thing for me?

If ...

Both partners agree they do not want any more children, or

Both partners are unable to or do not want to use other forms of contraception,

Then this **IS** the right procedure for you.

If ...

One partner is unsure if he/she is not done having children, or

The relationship is unstable or the relationship is under strain, or

You are considering storing sperm to have children later, or

You are single, divorced, or separated, or

You are doing this just to make your partner happy,

Then this may **NOT** be the right procedure for you.

Between 5% and 11% of men who have vasectomies regret the decision. A reversal procedure called vasovasostomy is available, but it is a major operation that provides no guarantee of restored fertility.

Are there any complications?

Any time skin is cut, there is the risk for bleeding, swelling, and infection. Adherence to “post-op” instructions will greatly reduce the likelihood of these complications. Other complications include a sperm granuloma (pea sized accumulation of sperm – often painless and resolves on its own) or congestive epididymitis (a build up for sperm which becomes infected and requires antibiotics). There is also a possibility of chronic (days to months or even longer) orchalgia (pain in the testicle). This may occur if a superficial nerve is cut and does not heal properly.

There is a chance that several years later, some sperm may find their way into the vas deferens and be ejaculated, causing a pregnancy.

In very rare cases, some men have more than two vas deferens or the ones cut in the procedure grow back together. In these cases, one would then be able to get their partner pregnant.

Any time an elective procedure is performed, the patient must make the decision that is right for him/her, accepting the risks which may accompany the desired benefit.

Myths ...

I will lose my sex drive ... hormones and libido are NOT affected by this procedure.

I won't be able to have an erection ... you will have the same level of sexual function as before.

I will get testicular or prostate cancer ... studies have proven this to be FALSE. There is no increase in cancer rate among men who have had vasectomies.

Want to know more information?

-Schedule an appointment with your doctor to discuss this further.

-Speak with others who have had this procedure.

-Investigate this subject on the internet

Enter “vasectomy” on www.Google.com

Or visit www.vasectomy.com

