

Male sterilisation (vasectomy) is a safe, effective and simple method of permanent birth control. Nothing is taken away except the ability to father children. As the operation is permanent, it is important that you and your partner read and reflect on the information in this leaflet to ensure that you make the right decision as a couple.

After you have had a vasectomy, the only difference is that your seminal fluid contains no sperm. As sperm only makes up a tiny part of seminal fluid, you will not notice any change. Vasectomy does not change who you are or how you feel about sex – it only prevents pregnancies.

As a couple you must be absolutely sure that you do not want any more children. Most men who choose to have a vasectomy are in a stable relationship and have fathered one or more children. We will consider, however, any man for a vasectomy provided he has seriously considered the implications.

Please do not rush your decision – there are many methods of family planning to allow you plenty of thinking time.

Please consider the following:

- None of us know what the future holds. What may seem very sensible now may be bitterly regretted later.
- One in three marriages end in divorce.
- One in 20 men who have had a vasectomy seek to have it reversed. Sometimes this is due to a new relationship, but often a stable couple simply change their minds.
- **Please do not have a vasectomy if you have any personal or sexual problems. The operation will not help these problems and may well add to your difficulties.**

DON'T STOP USING CONTRACEPTION

The operation is not immediately effective as it takes three or four months to clear your system of sperms. This means that you must continue to use effective contraception until your tests are clear. We will send you a letter when it is safe to stop using contraceptive precautions. If you have an accident we advise the use of "emergency contraception" which can be obtained from your GP or family planning clinic.

FAILURE RATES

Failure occurs in one in 700 men. Most failures show in your semen tests, so at least you will find out if it hasn't worked before you rely on the operation.

Once you have produced one clear test, there remains a 1 in 2,000 risk of failure over the rest of your life.

COMPLICATIONS

About 1 in 100 men will develop problems after their vasectomy. Most problems are minor and will get better without treatment.

After the operation, we advise that you rest for two days, lying flat for the first 24hrs. This will minimise the risk of swelling or bruising which can be a problem if you do too much too soon. It is better to rest for two days than risk developing a problem which could put you off work for three or four weeks!

Swelling and bruising does not need any treatment other than rest and ice. Very rarely, a leaking blood vessel will need to be found and sealed.

Infection may cause pain and swelling three or four days after the operation. Treatment with antibiotics is effective and should be started quickly.

Pain after the operation is usually mild and more of an ache than actual pain. Paracetamol or Co-Codamol is strong enough for most people. We advise against the use of Aspirin as this can increase the amount of bruising.

A small number of men may experience pain or discomfort for months after the vasectomy. This nearly always gets better by itself but further surgery or other treatment is occasionally needed.

LONG-TERM SIDE EFFECTS

There are no known long-term problems associated with having a vasectomy.

THE OPERATION

We use the no-scalpel vasectomy method (NSV), which has one-eighth of the complication rate of other methods, is quicker to perform, and more comfortable.

First the area is numbed with a local anaesthetic, using a very fine needle. You will feel a pin-prick and a slight stinging for a few seconds. After this you should not feel any discomfort at all.

The tubes are then held in place with a special instrument, before being blocked using an advanced electro-surgery technique. There will be only one tiny wound – no stitches are needed. The whole operation takes about twenty minutes to complete.

If you have had previous operations on the scrotum or testicles, the vasectomy may be more difficult. If this is the case, we will discuss with you whether or not we should proceed. Also, a small number of men have abnormalities that make the vasectomy very difficult. If this is the case, we will advise you to have the operation done in hospital under general anaesthetic.

All men are anxious about the operation, but most manage to relax and the usual comment afterwards is "It was nowhere near as bad as I thought it was going to be!"

BEFORE THE OPERATION

- Are you certain that you want no more children?
- Have a light meal.
- Trim the hair on the scrotum so that it is very short, especially the top part under the base of the penis. Shaving is not necessary.
- Bring some tight underwear for support afterwards. Swimming trunks are very effective.
- Please arrive in good time and allow 45minutes for your visit.
- Your partner is very welcome to accompany you.
- Arrange for someone to drive you home.
- **Book two days off work.**

AFTER THE OPERATION

Before you leave the clinic we will give you an information sheet to guide your recovery.

The anaesthetic will wear off after 2-3 hours, leaving an ache or throb rather than severe pain.

REST! Lie flat for the first 24hrs and gradually increase your activities provided you feel OK. Most sports can be resumed in 2 weeks.

Sexual activity can be resumed after 7 days, as long as you feel comfortable.

TESTS

You need to produce one clear test 14 weeks after your operation to be sure that the operation has worked.

Please Note You may need more than one test, in which case we will advise you when your extra tests are required. In extreme cases several tests may be required.

It is important that you use effective contraception until we inform you that it is safe to rely on your vasectomy.

QUERIES

If you have any queries regarding your appointment or if you are unable to attend please contact: Mrs Bekky Tickell on Tel: (0191) 374 6888. Thank you.

Claypath Vasectomy Service

Commissioned by North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board

No Scalpel Vasectomy Clinic

Claypath Medical Centre
26 Gilesgate
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And

University Health Centre
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DH1 3JX

Tel: (0191) 374 6888

<https://durhamstudenthealth.co.uk/vasectomy-clinic/>