

LOCAL ANAESTHETIC VASECTOMY AT SEXUAL HEALTH D&G (PATIENT INFORMATION)

You have requested a counselling session at Sexual Health D&G to discuss vasectomy under local anaesthetic. Please read this leaflet prior to your appointment.

Your operation cannot be done until a minimum of two weeks has passed since the counselling. If your operation is not done within 12 months of the counselling or more then it will be necessary to return for further discussion.

At the end of your counselling session if you wish to proceed to vasectomy you may be given the opportunity to book for your procedure or asked to phone at a later date on 0345 702 3687 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4.00pm) to arrange a suitable time for your operation.

Key Points

- Vasectomy is the most effective method of male sterilisation.
- It should always be regarded as “irreversible”.
- You will not be sterile immediately, and will need to continue alternative contraception until you have been given the “all-clear” from your post vasectomy semen tests after at least 16 weeks and 20 ejaculations. In a small number of men it can take 7 months or longer to show the operation has been successful.
- In 1 in 250 men the vasectomy is not successful in producing sterility.
- Late vasectomy failure, due to the ends joining themselves back together, occurs in 1 in 2000 men
- There is no evidence that vasectomy causes any long-term health risks (e.g. testicular cancer, prostate cancer)
- Troublesome chronic testicular pain is reported in up to 15 out of 100 men and can be severe enough to affect day-to-day activities in up to 5 out of 100.

You should regard vasectomy as an “irreversible” procedure. If you have any doubt about whether it is the right option for you, you should not go ahead. You should not make the decision about having a vasectomy during a pregnancy or shortly after having a child after the birth of a child due to a greater risk that you may later regret it.

What are the alternatives?

Other forms of contraception – both male and female.

What should I do before my appointment for vasectomy?

- Plan time off – at least a three to four days, longer if you have a strenuous / physical job.
- If between your counselling and the day of your procedure there are changes to your medical history or medications please let us know.
- The day before shave the skin of the entire scrotal sac and base of penis. This is to reduce the risk of infection. Do not wax or use hair removal creams. No other hair needs to be removed.
- Failure to shave is likely to result in the procedure not being carried out.
- Make sure you have some pain killers and ice packs ready at home.
- On the day of the procedure eat and drink as normal.
- Come to your appointment wearing tight underpants.
- Under no circumstances can you drive yourself home.

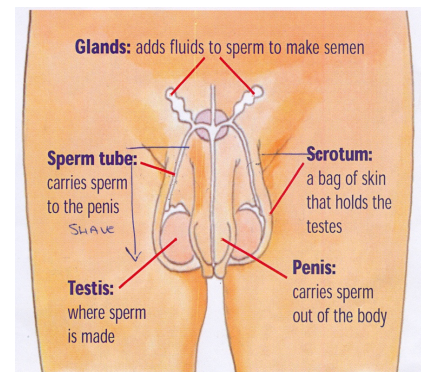
What happens on the day of the procedure?

Your doctor will briefly review your history and medications, and will discuss the surgery again with you to confirm your consent.

Details of the procedure

- Local anaesthetic is injected under the skin on either side of the scrotum. This may cause some discomfort

- Once this has worked your skin will be numb and you will not feel anything sharp.
- A small hole is made in the skin.
- When the tubes are picked up you may get some discomfort; this can make you light headed, sweaty and slightly sick but settles very quickly.
- A small portion of the tube is removed
- A stitch may be used to close the wound on the skin. The stitches normally dissolve themselves within 1-3 weeks.
- With one side complete the other side will be done



Are there any after-effects?

The possible after-effects and your risk of getting them are shown below*. Some are self limiting or reversible, but others are not. The impact of these after-effects can vary a lot from patient to patient; you may ask the doctor's advice about the risks and impact on you as an individual.

Almost all patients

- Mild bruising and scrotal swelling with seepage of clear, yellow fluid from the wound several days later.
- Blood in your semen the first few times you ejaculate

In 100 patients who have a vasectomy

- **Between 2 and 10 of them may experience** inflammation or infection of the testes or epididymis needing antibiotic treatment
- **Between 2 and 10 of them may experience** significant bruising and scrotal swelling requiring surgical drainage
- **Up to 5 of them may experience** troublesome chronic testicular pain which severe enough to affect day to day activities

There are **very** rare reports of men requiring removal of a testicle after a vasectomy either because the blood supply the testicle has been damaged or because chronic testicular pain has not responded to other treatments.

What can I expect when I get home?

- The local anaesthetic will wear off in four to six hours.
- It is advisable to take simple painkillers before the local anaesthetic wears off to keep the discomfort at bay. There will be discomfort for at least 48 hours.
- You will get some swelling and bruising of the scrotum which may last several days.
- You should wear tight supporting underpants for the first few days & nights to reduce any swelling or bruising.
- If you do have stitches these usually disappear after two to three weeks, although this may sometimes take slightly longer.
- Try to avoid any heavy lifting or strenuous exertion for two weeks.
- We will give you advice about what to look out for when you get home and who and who to contact them, in the event of problems.

It is essential that you understand you are **not** sterile immediately after the operation. This is because sperm has already passed beyond the site where the tubes are tied off. Sperm needs to be cleared by normal ejaculation. On average, you will need 20 to 30 ejaculations to clear them. At least 16 weeks after your vasectomy, you will be asked to produce a specimen of semen for examination under a microscope. Please read the instructions for producing and delivering the specimen very carefully. If no sperm is present, you will be given the "all-clear" that you are sterile. If the sample still contains sperm, you will be asked to produce further samples. In a small number of men it can take around seven months or longer to decide whether the operation has been successful or not. In around **1 in 250 patients the procedure fails to produce sterility.**

Re-joining of the ends of the tubes after initial negative sperm counts resulting in fertility & pregnancy at a later stage occurs in around **1 in 2000 patients.**

*Adapted from British Association of Urological Surgeons Leaflet No: 16/049