

# Facts About **Sterilization for Men (Vasectomy)**

## **What is a vasectomy?**

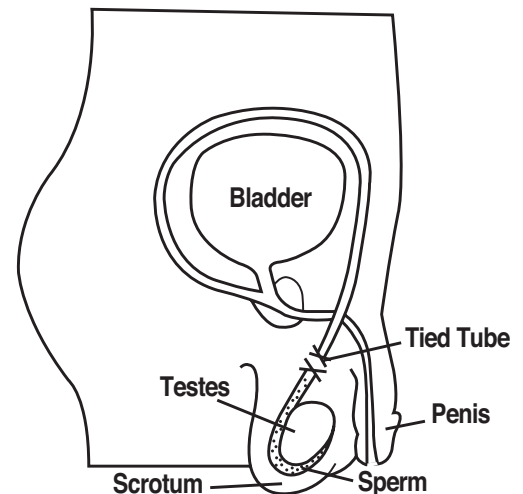
Vasectomy is an operation that permanently closes the tubes that carry sperm. After a man has a vasectomy, he is not able to father children. After this operation, the man needs no other type of birth control.

## **How well does it work?**

Vasectomy is permanent birth control (not reversible) that is over 99% effective at preventing pregnancy. Three months after the procedure, you will need to return to your healthcare provider to be tested to make sure there are no sperm in your semen (semen analysis). It takes about three months to clear the sperm out of your system. You will need to use another type of birth control (condoms, for example) every time you have sex until your healthcare provider tells you there are no longer any sperm in your semen.

## **How is a vasectomy done?**

A vasectomy is an outpatient procedure done under local anesthesia. The doctor makes tiny cuts in the scrotum, the sac that holds the testes or "balls." Then the doctor cuts and seals the two tiny tubes that carry sperm to the penis so that the sperm cannot leave the body. Some men receive a "no-scalpel" vasectomy where, instead of cutting the skin of the scrotum, one tiny puncture (hole) is made to reach both tubes. The tubes that carry sperm are pulled through the hole and cut and tied off. A "no-scalpel" vasectomy does not require stitches.



## **Why is vasectomy a good choice for me?**

- The man's partner does not have to know about it or do anything different
- Removes the contraceptive burden from the woman
- Most cost-effective of all birth control methods
- Safe and highly effective approach to preventing pregnancy
- Lasts a lifetime, so no need to worry about birth control again
- Quick recovery time after the procedure
- The procedure is simple to do and usually involves only a little bit of discomfort
- It is an outpatient procedure and you can go home the same day

## **Vasectomy is NOT right for you if:**

- You want to have more children
- You are being pressured by a partner, friends or family
- You want to use it to solve problems that may be temporary – such as marriage or sexual problems, short-term mental or physical illnesses, financial worries, or being out of work

## **Will I have any problems with the vasectomy?**

- There is a risk of swelling, bruising, and tenderness for a short period of time after the procedure.
- Very rarely, the tubes that carry sperm can grow back together. When this happens there is a risk of pregnancy.

## **How soon can I have sex after the vasectomy?**

For most men, sexual activity can begin again within a week. Others have sex sooner and some wait longer. **REMEMBER**, some sperm may still be in the tubes and you will need to use another type of birth control (condoms, for example) every time you have sex until your doctor or clinic tells you there are no longer any sperm in your semen.

## **When can I get the vasectomy?**

A man can have a vasectomy at any time. If you are interested in getting a vasectomy, talk with your doctor or clinic.

For Medicaid or other federal programs to pay for vasectomy, you must be 21 years of age and have signed a consent form giving permission 30 days before the procedure. Once you have signed the papers, you can change your mind any time.

### **REMEMBER:**

- Vasectomy does not protect you from STIs (sexually transmitted infections) or HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) you can get when you have sex. Protect yourself; use a latex or vinyl condom each time you have oral, anal or vaginal sex.

