

# Female Sterilization Fact Sheet

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## SOURCES:

Office on Women's Health

- ❖ [Birth Control Methods: Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- ❖ [Fertility Awareness](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- ❖ [Unintended Pregnancy Prevention: Contraception](#)

Food and Drug Administration

- ❖ [Birth Control Guide](#)

### How do I get it?

Female sterilization is a relatively simple out-patient surgery done in a clinic, doctor's office, or hospital. It can be performed under local or general anesthesia.

To search for a family planning clinic near you, go to <http://www.opaclearinghouse.org/search/>.



### What is female sterilization?

Female sterilization permanently prevents women from becoming pregnant. There are different medical procedures to achieve this goal, but they all work by blocking the fallopian tubes (tubes that lead from the ovaries of females into the uterus) so that sperm cannot meet with and fertilize an egg.

Since these methods cannot be undone, they are only recommended for women who are sure they never want to have a baby or who do not want to have more children.

**Surgical sterilization:** The fallopian tubes are cut, sealed, or tied. With this method, very tiny cuts (called incisions) are made in the abdomen or belly. This is also known as having "tubes tied" or tubal ligation. Surgical sterilization works to prevent pregnancy right away.

**Non-surgical sterilization:** A very small spring-like coil is placed into each fallopian tube. The coils cause scar tissue to form in the tubes, thereby blocking the tubes. This method does not involve cuts or incisions. Instead, a health care provider uses a thin tube to thread the small coils through the vagina and uterus into the fallopian tubes, where the coils will stay.

With the non-surgical option, it will take up to three months for the scar tissue to fully block the tubes. So, it is important to use a back-up type of birth control (like a condom) until your health care provider says it is not needed. You will go back to the clinic or office for an exam and be checked to make sure the coils are in the right place and the tubes are blocked.



### Advantages of female sterilization

- ❖ A safe and highly effective approach to preventing pregnancy
- ❖ Female sterilization lasts a lifetime, so no need to worry about birth control again



- ❖ This type of birth control is controlled by the female and does not require the consent of her partner

### How effective is it?

Out of 100 women who have a sterilization procedure, less than one would expect to become pregnant each year.



### Drawbacks of the female sterilization

- ❖ Provides no protection against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- ❖ There is a risk of infection, pain, or bleeding
- ❖ Very rarely, the tubes can grow back together. When this happens there is a risk for pregnancy. In some cases, this leads to tubal or ectopic pregnancy, when the pregnancy happens in the fallopian tubes
- ❖ Some women later change their mind and wish they could have a child or additional children



### Quick Facts

#### Effectiveness in Preventing Pregnancy

- ❖ Of 100 who have a sterilization procedure done, less than one would expect to get pregnant each year
- ❖ Female sterilization is effective for a lifetime

#### Use

- ❖ An out-patient surgical procedure where the fallopian tubes are cut, sealed, or “tied”
- ❖ Another option is a non-surgical procedure where tiny devices are put in each fallopian tube, causing scar tissue to form, which prevents pregnancy by blocking the tubes

#### STI Protection

- ❖ No

#### Clinic Visit Required

- ❖ Yes, done by a health care provider as an out-patient procedure (you go home the same day)

