

Male Sterilization Fact Sheet

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SOURCES:

Office on Women's Health

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

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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

Food and Drug Administration

- ❖ [Birth Control Guide](#)

What is male sterilization?

Male sterilization, or vasectomy, is a procedure performed on a man that will permanently keep him from being able to get a woman pregnant.



How do I get?

A vasectomy can be done in a medical office or clinic. It is an out-patient procedure, so a man can go home the same day. To search for a family planning clinic near you, go to <http://www.opaclearinghouse.org/search/>.

It is done by a health care provider making tiny cuts (called incisions) in the scrotum (the sac that holds the testicles or “balls”). Then the tubes that carry sperm (that get a woman pregnant) to the penis are tied off and cut. A man first gets a shot to numb the area, so he does not feel anything during the procedure.

Some men receive a no-scalpel vasectomy where, instead of cutting the scrotum, very tiny holes are made. The tubes that carry sperm are pulled through the holes and tied off and cut. A no-scalpel vasectomy does not require stitches.

After a vasectomy, a man will still produce fluid (semen) that comes out of his penis when he has sex. A few months after the procedure he goes back to the clinic so a doctor or nurse can check and make sure no sperm can be found in his semen. There might be some sperm in the semen for a short while after the vasectomy, so a man should use another type of birth control (like a condom) until the doctor or nurse says it is safe.



Advantages of male sterilization

- ❖ Is controlled by the male and does not require the consent of his partner
- ❖ A safe and highly effective approach to preventing pregnancy
- ❖ Male sterilization lasts a lifetime, so no need to worry about birth control again
- ❖ The procedure is simple to do and usually involves only a little bit of discomfort

How effective is it?

In couples where the man has a vasectomy, about one woman out of 100 will get pregnant.





Drawbacks of male sterilization

- ❖ Provides no protection against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- ❖ Requires a visit to a clinic or medical office
- ❖ There is a risk of swelling, bruising, and tenderness for a short time after the procedure
- ❖ Very rarely, the tubes that carry sperm can grow back together. When this happens there is a risk for pregnancy
- ❖ Some men, or their partners, later change their mind and wish they could have a child or additional children



Quick Facts

Effectiveness in Preventing Pregnancy

- ❖ In couples where the man has a vasectomy, about one woman out of 100 will get pregnant.
- ❖ Male sterilization is effective for a lifetime

Use

- ❖ A minor out-patient surgical procedure where the tubes that carry sperm are permanently blocked off

STI Protection

- ❖ No

Clinic Visit Required

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

