

VASECTOMY

Advantages of a Vasectomy

Vasectomy is a simple procedure. It makes men sterile (unable to fertilize an egg) by keeping sperm out of semen – the fluid that spurts from the penis during sex. Sperm is made in the testes. They pass through two tubes called the vas deferens to other glands and mix with seminal fluids to form semen. A vasectomy blocks each vas deferens and keeps sperm out of the seminal fluid. The sperm are absorbed by the body instead of being ejaculated. Without the presence of sperm, your “cum” cannot cause a pregnancy. A vasectomy does not affect masculinity. It does not affect your ability to have an erection or maintain an erection. Vasectomy continues to be simpler, safer, less expensive, and as effective as female sterilization. The main advantages of Vasectomy are as follows:

1. Permanence
2. High effectiveness
3. High acceptability
4. Safety
5. Quick recovery
6. Lack of significant long-term side effects
7. Cost effectiveness (most cost effective of all contraceptive methods)
8. No need to buy anything
9. No need for partner compliance (partner may have to sign a consent for vasectomy at some agencies)
10. No need to interrupt lovemaking
11. Privacy of choice
12. Removal of contraceptive burden from the woman

Disadvantages of a Vasectomy

Vasectomy is not effective until all sperm in the reproductive tract are ejaculated. Complications such as bleeding or infection as well as failure, although infrequent, do occur. As a contraceptive method, vasectomy provides indirect protection from pregnancy for the woman. The major disadvantages of vasectomy are as follow:

1. Reversal is difficult, and though possible, it is expensive, requires a highly technical and major surgery, and it's results cannot be guaranteed.
2. Regret for the decision
3. Need for trained physician, procedure room (clean conditions) trained assistants, medications, surgical equipment
4. Expense at the time of procedure
5. Lack of protection against STI's, including HIV

Preoperative Instructions

1. Informed consent-partner may need to sign at some provider's office.
2. Be completely sure of your decision to have a vasectomy. You must understand and desire the permanence of vasectomy. You can change your mind at any time before the operation.
3. Before surgery while you are home, use scissors to cut all hair from around the penis and scrotum to about ¼ inch in length.

4. Shower or bathe, washing the penis and scrotum thoroughly to remove all loose hairs.
5. If possible, bring someone who can accompany you home after the procedure. Do not ride a bicycle and avoid walking long distances or using other transportation that may rub or put pressure on the scrotum.
6. Plan to remain quiet for about 48 hours following the vasectomy. A 48 – hour rest is important to decrease the risk of complications.

Postoperative Instructions

1. Following surgery, return home and rest for about 2 days. If possible, keep an ice pack on the scrotum for at least 4 hours, to reduce the chances of swelling, bleeding, and discomfort. Wear a scrotal support for 2 days (jockey shorts will be adequate). You may be able to resume your normal activities after 2 or 3 days.
2. Avoid strenuous physical exercise for 1 week; no lifting or straining that could bring pressure to the groin or scrotum.
3. Do not shower or bathe for the first 24 hours after the vasectomy.
4. You may resume sexual intercourse after 2 or 3 days if you feel it would be comfortable; but remember you are not sterile immediately. You will want to use condoms or another form of birth control to prevent pregnancy. You may want to have a semen analysis approximately 3 months after surgery.
5. Stitches will dissolve and do not need to be taken out.
6. If you have pain or discomfort, simple analgesics suggested by your provider will help.
7. Know what is abnormal (a) temperature over 100 degrees (b) pain-unable to work or sleep (c) discharge-pus or inflammation at the incision site (d) bleeding from the incision site (e) swelling of your testicles to greater than twice normal size (f) nodules larger than a nickel with pain and tenderness (g) extreme pulling with stitches.
8. Vasectomy is a permanent form of birth control.

Resources: Contraceptive Technology 18th Edition
Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc.

Supported by grant number FPHPA07008 from the Office of Population Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Region VII

