

About Marie Stopes International

Marie Stopes International is a specialist reproductive healthcare organisation and a registered charity, working in both the UK and overseas.

Our nine main UK centres help over 100,000 women and men each year with abortion, sterilisation, contraception and health screening ... but the good work does not stop here.

Any financial surplus generated in the UK helps us provide reproductive healthcare services to women and their families in some of the poorest communities in the world.

The organisation campaigns for better awareness of sexual health issues and open access to services for everyone. Our aim is to provide a high quality service, tailored to individual need. Whichever service you require, we offer convenient appointments and experienced teams who are supportive and professional.

Marie Stopes International

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female sterilisation

information and services



female sterilisation

Female sterilisation is the most popular method of family planning in the world. This leaflet offers a brief guide to the sterilisation service at Marie Stopes International.

Is female sterilisation the right choice for me?

If you are certain that you have completed your family or that you will never want to have any children, female sterilisation is ideal. It is permanent, so you will not have to worry about contraception again.

On the other hand, if you are not sure whether you might want children in the future, you really should not choose sterilisation. Alternatives such as the pill, hormone injections, implants and IUD's (coils) may be more appropriate.

The sterilisation procedure itself is suitable for most women. Some medical conditions such as fibroids, ovarian cysts or previous surgery to the pelvic area can make it a little more complex, but you can discuss this at the consultation with your doctor.

How is the procedure performed?

The aim of the procedure is to close the fallopian tubes, which carry eggs from the uterus. A sterilisation procedure is carried out using general anaesthetic. A narrow instrument called a laparoscope is passed through a small incision just below the naval (you will only have a tiny scar). This allows the surgeon to view your fallopian tubes and seal them using clips. The whole procedure takes about 15 – 20 minutes.

What happens to the body after sterilisation?

Your ovaries continue to release eggs, but because the fallopian tubes are sealed, they will simply be reabsorbed into the body.

Sterilisation does not affect your hormones and does not cause an early menopause.

Most women continue to have normal periods although about one in ten find that their periods become heavier after sterilisation.

What are the risks?

Sterilisation is very effective, but does carry a small risk of failure. Although this is rare, affecting less than 1% of women, it is important that you are aware of the possibility of a future pregnancy. The risk of long-term failure is more likely in women who are sterilised under the age of 28.

Although sterilisation is a very common and safe procedure, as with any surgical procedure, there is a small risk of damage to other organs (in this case bowel and uterus) and of infection. However these problems are extremely rare.

Sterilisation is a simple and safe procedure which has no effect on female hormones.

How long will I take to recover?

We advise that you take a week off work and avoid any heavy lifting or hard exercise for about two weeks. If you have small children try and get some extra help.

Services at Marie Stopes International

Marie Stopes International offers a comprehensive female sterilisation service, which includes consultation, procedure and aftercare.

Appointments are usually available within a couple of weeks. It is possible to book both the consultation and procedure on the same day or separately if you would like to have more time to consider your decision.

Our service is completely confidential. We will not tell anyone about your appointment, including your GP, without your permission.

We will not refuse anyone an appointment on the grounds of age, marital status or because they have no children. However we do advise that younger women attend a separate counselling appointment before their procedure.

Vasectomy services are also widely available at our centres. Please ask if you would like more information about this option.

Contacting us:

Marie Stopes International provides female sterilisation services at:

Marie Stopes Essex Centre
88 Russell Road, Buckhurst Hill
Essex, IG9 5QB

You can also discuss sterilisation with our teams at any Marie Stopes International centre.

For information and appointments:

Telephone **0845 300 0212** – 24 hours
www.mariestopes.org.uk