

vasectomy

your questions answered



MARIE STOPES
INTERNATIONAL

About Marie Stopes International

Marie Stopes International is one of the UK's most respected names in sexual health. Each year, our nine centres across the UK help over 100,000 women and men with their sexual health needs.

Our supportive and professional team provide the highest possible quality service in a friendly and relaxed environment.

Since the 1970s over 130,000 British men have trusted us to perform their vasectomies. But the good work does not stop here.

Across the world Marie Stopes International also provides reproductive healthcare services to people in some of the world's poorest communities including Africa, Asia and South America.

By choosing Marie Stopes International for your vasectomy, you will be supporting our work in these countries too.

For information and appointments call **0845 300 0212** (24 hours) or visit **www.vasectomy.org.uk**

Vasectomy is the only permanent method of male contraception, chosen by an estimated 13% of British men.

This booklet aims to answer some common questions about vasectomy.

If you are thinking of having a vasectomy we hope this will give you the information you need to make a decision.

If there is anything else you want to know then please feel free to call us on **0845 300 0212** (open 24 hours) or email services@mariestopes.org.uk

What is a vasectomy?

Vasectomy is a permanent method of male contraception. It is a simple surgical procedure that seals the sperm-carrying tubes (the vas deferens) to prevent sperm from entering the fluid you ejaculate. The procedure usually takes just 10 minutes.

Why choose vasectomy?

The main reasons men choose to have a vasectomy are that either they have completed their family and have decided to take permanent responsibility for contraception, or in some cases, may not wish to have children at all.

“ This was an excellent experience given that I felt naturally apprehensive before it. The team, especially in the treatment room, put me at ease. ”

Vasectomy – the right decision for you?

Even if you are sure that you want to have a vasectomy, you are bound to have questions and possibly some concerns.

Before choosing a vasectomy you need to be absolutely sure it is the right choice for you, as a vasectomy cannot be easily reversed.

Only you can decide whether or not to have a vasectomy. You do not need your partner's agreement and our service is completely confidential.

However, if you are in a long-term relationship, we would advise that you discuss such an important decision with your partner. We will not inform anyone, including your GP, without your permission.

If you would like to talk to someone before making a final decision to have a vasectomy, call us on **0845 300 0212** to arrange an appointment with one of our experienced advisors.

We will not refuse anyone on the grounds of age or marital status. However, younger men may wish to have a discussion with an experienced advisor to ensure that this is the right decision for them.

Is a vasectomy 100% effective?

Both vasectomy and female sterilisation are the most effective long-term methods of contraception. However, there is a very small possibility of failure, less than 1%, with either method. With regard to vasectomy this can be categorised as short-term or long-term failure.

The vasectomy procedure involves sealing the sperm-carrying tubes but, in rare cases, the tubes may join together naturally:

Short-term failure: Should semen tests carried out following the procedure demonstrate a consistent pattern of positive results, it has to be assumed that healing has taken place and a repeat procedure may be advised, which would be carried out at no extra cost.

Long-term failure: It is possible, although very rare (less than 1%) for the tubes to rejoin years after a vasectomy. Unfortunately, there is no way of predicting this in advance and the only warning sign will be an accidental pregnancy. For additional peace of mind we are able to provide yearly semen testing for a very small charge.

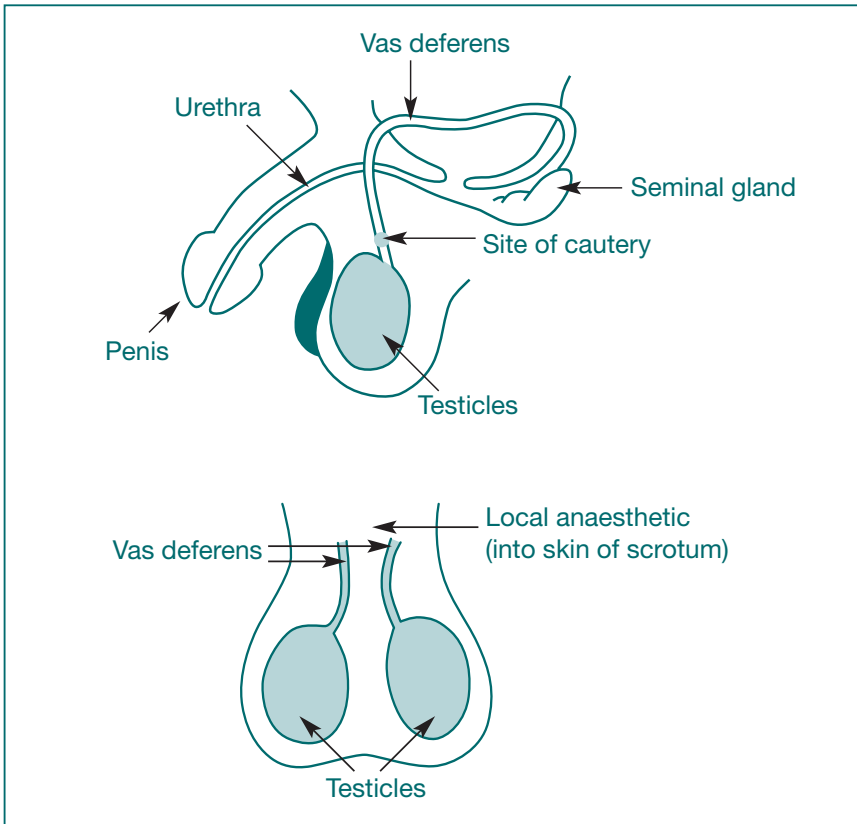
How is a vasectomy performed?

The sperm carrying tubes are called the vas deferens and these tubes come from a man's testicles. When a vasectomy is performed the vas deferens are sealed to stop sperm getting through. This does not affect the ejaculate fluid as this comes from a different area called the seminal gland.

A fast acting local anaesthetic is given, which quickly numbs the area. We are also able to offer sedation at some of our centres if you are feeling very apprehensive.

At Marie Stopes International centres a cautery technique is used. The incision to locate the vas deferens is very tiny and no scalpel or stitches are needed, except in very rare cases. The vasectomy procedure takes about 10-15 minutes to perform.

After a vasectomy the testicles will continue to produce sperm as normal, but it cannot enter the tubes and is simply reabsorbed into the body.



Is a vasectomy effective straight away?

No, as there will be some sperm left in your tubes after the procedure and you will still need to use another method of contraception for three to four months until the tubes have cleared.

We will ask you to provide sperm samples at specified times after the procedure, which we will test to check if there are sperm still present.

When you have given two consecutive samples in a row that are both free from sperm we will write and inform you that your vasectomy has been successful and that you can stop using contraception, however in some cases, this can take several tests.

Vasectomy and your health

Vasectomy is a very common and safe procedure and most men recover very quickly and go back to work after a period of rest. Any complications are very rare.

When booking your appointment we will ask you a few questions about your medical history and any medication you are taking. For example, we need to know if you have had any previous surgery on your testicles or a hernia repair. Scar tissue from these procedures may make the procedure a little more complicated to perform.

There is no firm evidence linking vasectomy to cancer of the prostate or testicles. However we advise all men, whether or not they have had a vasectomy, to undergo regular health screening. It is also important to get into the habit of regularly checking your testicles for lumps.

A very small number of men have been known to experience long term testicular pain following a vasectomy, which may require follow-up treatment. However, we stress that in over 130,000 vasectomies performed at our centres, we have seen very few cases of this kind.

Vasectomy and your sex life

Some men naturally worry that a vasectomy will affect their enjoyment of sex. Having a vasectomy has no effect on your hormones, orgasm or ejaculation, so there is no reason why a vasectomy should have a negative impact on your sex life.

In fact, many couples say they enjoy sex more afterwards as they can be completely spontaneous without worrying about an unintended pregnancy.

The fluid you ejaculate will look exactly the same; the only difference will be there are no sperm in it.



It took me a while to decide to have a vasectomy but I can honestly say I've never once regretted it.



How much does it cost?

Details of our current fees are available from our information service and can be found at www.vasectomy.org.uk and in our booking form. When you book your appointment you will be asked to pay a deposit. The balance of the fee will be payable when you arrive at the centre. If your treatment is going to be funded by the NHS, payment does not apply.

How to book an appointment

Appointments are usually available within a couple of weeks. Marie Stopes International has centres nationwide, we will advise you of your nearest centre or you can find this information online at www.vasectomy.org.uk

Ways to book:

- 1 Call our information service on **0845 300 0212** (open 7 days a week, 24 hours)
- 2 Log on to www.vasectomy.org.uk and fill in the online booking form

Please feel free to call at any time for more information or to discuss specific availability.

Once your appointment date has been decided you can choose to have a telephone consultation prior to this, or a consultation on the day of your treatment with one of our medically trained staff. This can be booked at a time convenient for you.

space for your notes

Contacting us

We hope that this booklet has helped to answer your questions. However, if there is anything you are unsure about, or anything that is worrying you, please contact us.

To book an appointment call our information service on **0845 300 0212** (24 hours)

or book online at **www.vasectomy.org.uk**

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