

# Bilateral Vasectomy

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This fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional.

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## What is a vasectomy?

A vasectomy is a permanent method of male contraception. It involves cutting both the tubes (vas deferens) that carry sperm from your testicles. This prevents sperm from mixing with semen and reaching your penis. A vasectomy should prevent your partner from becoming pregnant.

## What are the benefits of surgery?

You or your partner should not need to use another method of contraception.

## Are there any alternatives to a vasectomy?

The only other method of male contraception is to use a condom, but the risk of failure is higher.

A sterilisation is a permanent method of female contraception.

- Hormone implants.
- A coil or intrauterine contraceptive device.
- Oral contraceptive pill.

## What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a local or general anaesthetic. The operation usually takes 15 to 20 minutes.

Your surgeon will usually make one small cut on each side of your scrotum. Sometimes they will make a single cut on the middle of your scrotum. Your surgeon will cut the tubes that carry sperm from each testicle to your penis and close the ends with stitches, clips or an electric current (cauterisation).

## How can I prepare myself for the operation?

If you smoke, stopping smoking now may reduce your risk of developing complications and will improve your long-term health.

Try to maintain a healthy weight. You have a higher risk of developing complications if you are overweight.

Regular exercise should help to prepare you for the operation, help you to recover and improve your long-term health. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Speak to the healthcare team about any vaccinations you might need to reduce your risk of serious illness while you recover. When you come into hospital, practise social distancing and hand washing and wear a face covering when asked.

## What complications can happen?

### General complications of any operation

- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound) or in your scrotum
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication
- Chest infection

### Specific complications of this operation

- Becoming fertile again
- Sperm granuloma, where sperm leaks and causes small painful swellings
- Long-term pain in your testicles
- Congestive epididymitis, where the tube-like structure that stores sperm gets blocked

### Consequences of this procedure

- Pain

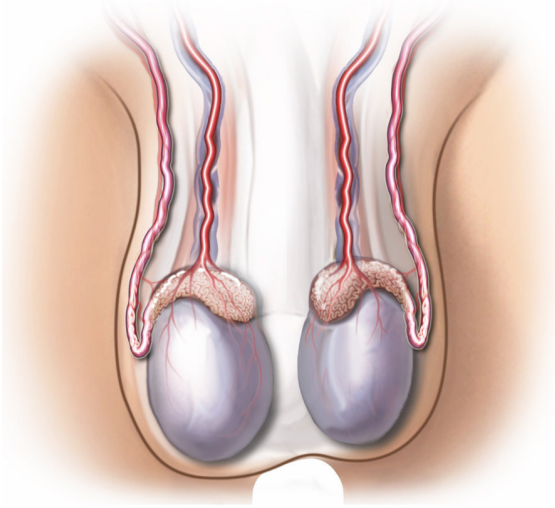
## How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day.

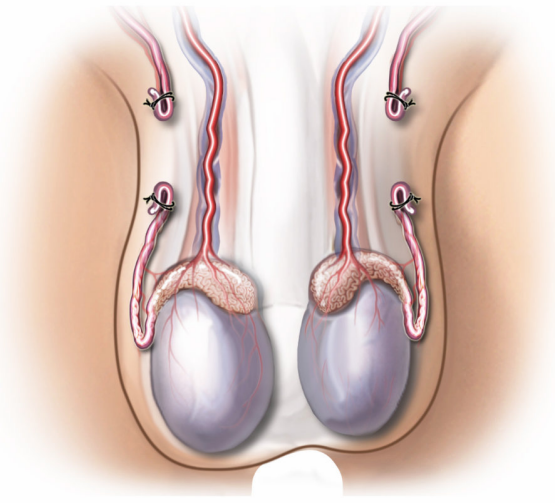
To reduce the risk of bleeding, do not ejaculate or do strenuous exercise, like running and riding a bicycle, for 5 to 7 days.

You should be able to return to work after about 2 days (about a week if your work involves strenuous exercise).

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.



Before a vasectomy



After a bilateral vasectomy

Your doctor will ask you to give one or two samples of your semen after you have ejaculated 20 times following the operation. The samples will be tested to find out if there are any sperm left. Use another method of contraception until your doctor tells you that the operation has been a success and you are sperm-free.

## Summary

A vasectomy is an operation to cut the tubes that carry sperm from your testicles. It is a permanent and effective method of male contraception.

Keep this information document. Use it to help you if you need to talk to the healthcare team.

Some information, such as risk and complication statistics, is taken from global studies and/or databases. Please ask your surgeon or doctor for more information about the risks that are specific to you, and they may be able to tell you about any other suitable treatments options.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant healthcare team would give you.

## Acknowledgements

### Reviewer

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**Illustrator**

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