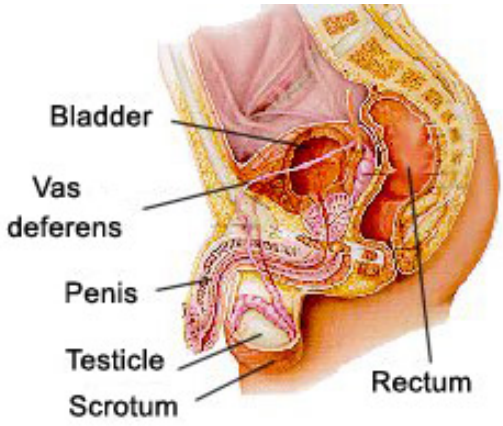
Vasectomy

A vasectomy is tying (with or without cutting) the tube that collects the sperm from the testicle (*vas deferens*). The vasectomy blocks the sperm from going through the vas deferens and penis so that during sexual intercourse, the sperm does not go into the vagina. Vasectomy is safe, with very rare complications. It does not affect your sexual desire or performance.



Since vasectomy is considered permanent, you should not have it done until you are sure you do not want any more children. You and your partner should be in full agreement to have the procedure. Your decision to have a vasectomy should not be made during a stressful situation. This includes loss of a pregnancy, illness, death of a spouse or divorce. There are other means of contraception that can be used until you are completely sure you want this procedure done. A vasectomy does not protect you from sexually transmitted disease.

Men who want the vasectomy reversed need an operation. It may not be successful. A vasectomy has less risk and is less expensive than a woman having a tubal sterilization.

LET YOUR CAREGIVER KNOW ABOUT:

- Allergies.
- Medications taken including herbs, eye drops, over the counter medications, and creams.
- Use of steroids (by mouth or creams).
- Past problems with anesthetics or Novocaine.
- History of blood clots (*thrombophlebitis*).
- History of bleeding or blood problems.
- Past surgery.

RISKS AND COMPLICATIONS OF THE PROCEDURE

- Failure of the procedure to cause infertility. This means you would still be able to get a female pregnant.
- Post-operative pain. This can usually be controlled with medicine.
- Infection. A germ starts growing in the wound. This can usually be treated with antibiotics.
- An allergic reaction to the anesthetic or other medicine given.
- Bleeding. Blood may seep under the skin so that the scrotum and penis appear to be bruised. Sometimes the scrotum can swell and get the size of a grapefruit. This usually disappears without treatment within a week or two.

PROCEDURE:

- The scrotum is cleaned with bacterial killing soap and the caregiver finds the vas deferens.
- Each side of the scrotum is numbed.
- A very small cut (*incision*) is made, and the vas deferens are pulled out of the scrotum. The vas deferens are then tied off, cut or may be burned (*cauterized*) at the ends.
- Sometimes the vas deferens are pulled out from the scrotum through a puncture wound. This is done with a special instrument without an incision.
- The vas deferens are then put back into the scrotum, and the incision or puncture wound is closed.
- After surgery, sperm may still be left in the vas deferens for 1 to 3 months. Because of this, other means of contraception should be used until your caregiver examines you and finds there are no sperm in your seminal fluid.
- Castration is another method that is the surgical removal of both testicles. It causes sterilization in men.

Having a vasectomy should be discussed with your care giver with you and your partner present. Ask questions and talk about your concerns with your caregiver. Then, you can decide if the operation is safe for you. You can

change your mind and cancel the surgery at any time. This is true even if you have signed the consent forms to have it done.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- An ice pack for 20 minutes, 4-6 times per day will help decrease swelling.
- Wearing supportive briefs or an athletic supporter will help decrease swelling.
- Avoid being active for the first two days after surgery.
- Keep the incisions clean and covered to prevent infection.
- Some oozing of blood from the cut (*incision*) is normal during the first day or two after surgery.
- **Do not** participate in sports or do heavy physical labor for at least two weeks.
- Follow your caregivers instructions regarding diet, rest, work, social and sexual activities and follow up appointments.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wounds or testicles.
- Pus is coming from wound.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 102º F (38.9º C) develops, or as directed by your caregiver.
- You notice a bad smell coming from the wound or material covering the wound (*dressing*).
- There is a breaking open of the stitches (*suture*) or wound edges even after sutures have been removed. Sometimes these incisions are not sutured.
- There is increased bleeding from the wounds.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

Document Released: 11/09/2005 Document Re-Released: 05/06/2010
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.