

Vasectomy

A PATIENT'S GUIDE



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WHAT IS A VASECTOMY?

A vasectomy is a permanent and effective means for preventing pregnancy. A vasectomy is a surgical procedure performed on a man that cuts the vas deferens, the tube that brings sperm from the testes, where it is made, to the penis during ejaculation.

Are You Considering a Vasectomy?

The urologists at Arizona Urology Specialists understand that choosing to have a vasectomy is a very personal decision that should be considered carefully. Arizona Urology Specialists is here to guide you through the process by providing education, support and information to help you make the best choice for you and your family.

A Time-Tested, Safe Procedure

While many methods of contraception are available, vasectomy is a time tested and very safe procedure. Understandably, some men are apprehensive about a vasectomy because it involves such a delicate area of the body. You can rest assured that our surgeons utilize their extensive experience in reproductive microsurgery and minimally invasive surgical techniques to perform your vasectomy with great precision.

Most men are relieved to discover that a vasectomy actually causes very little pain or discomfort after the procedure and recovery is typically quick. And, a vasectomy will not affect a man's libido, ejaculation, sexual pleasure, or erections.

Did You Know?

More than 500,000 vasectomies are performed every year in the U.S.

HOW A VASECTOMY IS PERFORMED

A vasectomy is performed by cutting the vas deferens, the tube that carries sperm from the testes to the penis. This prevents the sperm from exiting the penis during ejaculation. After a vasectomy, your body will continue to produce sperm, but they will die and be naturally re-absorbed by your body. A vasectomy will not noticeably affect the seminal fluid; your ejaculate will still look and feel the same. A vasectomy also will not affect your testosterone (male hormone) levels or your ability to have an erection.

The Procedure Step-By-Step

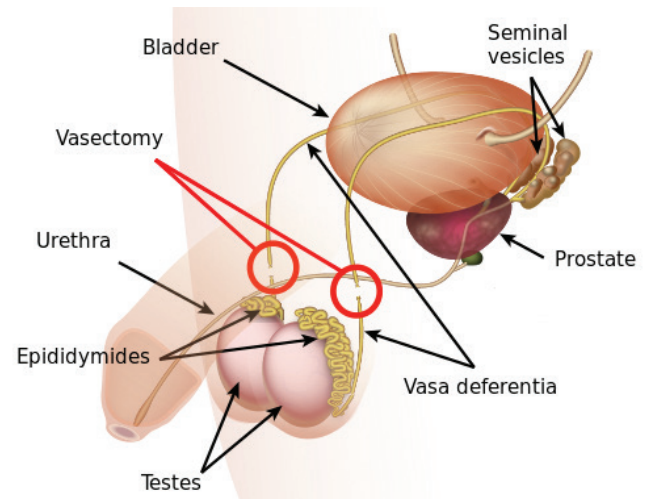
Vasectomy is an outpatient procedure typically performed under local anesthesia in one of our offices. You might feel a bit apprehensive before your procedure so understanding what will take place before you arrive can help alleviate some of your anxiety.

- First, a local anesthetic is administered, which results in a pain-free procedure.
- Your surgeon will make a small opening in the scrotum. The sperm duct, called the vas deferens, is exposed through the opening. A 1-centimeter segment on either side of each testicle is then removed.
- The ends of the vas deferens are then cauterized and sealed with titanium clips and placed back inside the scrotum.
- A small dissolvable stitch is placed to close the hole in the scrotum. The procedure usually takes less than 20 minutes.

- Patients typically return to work in about three to four days, and an ice pack placed gently on the scrotum is recommended to reduce any pain or swelling following the procedure. If you do have any discomfort, acetaminophen can be taken.

“No Scalpel” Vasectomy

Our skilled surgeons are experienced in performing what is known as a “no scalpel” vasectomy. Rather than using a scalpel to make an incision in the scrotum, your doctor will use a special instrument to puncture the skin, which is then stretched to make an opening for the vasectomy to be performed. Your doctor will discuss all of the options for performing the minimally invasive procedure with you at your first appointment.



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PREPARING FOR YOUR VASECTOMY

Your doctor will provide you with instructions to follow prior to your procedure including:

- Stop taking vitamin supplements, aspirin or ibuprofen one week before your vasectomy. These anti-inflammatory medications thin the blood and can cause excessive bleeding. If you are currently taking any blood thinners, please inform your doctor.
- You may eat a light meal before your procedure.
- You may shave your scrotum at home prior to the procedure.
- Bring an athletic supporter to the procedure, preferably with a pouch in which you can place an ice pack, to decrease swelling.



WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR VASECTOMY

Most patients are surprised that the procedure is quick and often causes little pain or discomfort. Shortly after the procedure, you will be able to drive home. Your doctor will recommend the following to ensure a rapid and comfortable recovery:

- To minimize discomfort, you may be prescribed pain relievers. Use an ice pack and/or an athletic supporter to minimize swelling in the area of the vasectomy.
- You can resume work in about three to four days following the procedure.
- Try to remain off your feet for 24 hours.
- Contact your doctor if you experience fever, chills, increasing pain or significant swelling and bruising.

When can I resume sexual activity?

It's important to know that you must use other forms of birth control until your doctor assures you that your vasectomy is completely effective. This may take several months until all of the sperm left in the upper part of the vas deferens is ejaculated. In approximately two to three months following the vasectomy, a semen sample is brought to an outpatient laboratory for analysis. Your doctor will call you with the results. Once your sperm count is zero, it is safe to resume sexual intercourse with no other birth control method necessary.

ADVANTAGES OF A VASECTOMY

- A safe, effective and permanent method of birth control.
- 99.85% effective as a birth control method.
- A vasectomy will not interfere with your sex drive, ability to have erections, sensation of orgasm, or ability to ejaculate.

CAN MY VASECTOMY BE REVERSED?

Yes. A vasectomy can be reversed in a procedure appropriately called a vasectomy reversal. Sometimes, life circumstances change and years after having a vasectomy, some men wish to be able to conceive a child naturally with their partner.

We offer this procedure to couples who wish to conceive naturally.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is a vasectomy?

A: A vasectomy is a permanent and effective means for preventing pregnancy. A vasectomy is performed by cutting the vas deferens, the tube that carries sperm from the testes to the penis. This prevents the sperm from exiting the penis during ejaculation. After a vasectomy, your body will continue to produce sperm, but they will die and be naturally re-absorbed by your body. Vasectomy is one of the most effective forms of birth control and more than 500,000 vasectomies are performed every year in the U.S. Vasectomy is 99.85% effective as a birth control method.

Q: Is a vasectomy safe?

A: Yes, vasectomy is a time tested and very safe procedure. As with any surgical procedure, however, there may be some minimal risks or side effects which your doctor will discuss with you prior to your procedure.

Q: Will the vasectomy be effective as birth control right away?

A: No. You must use other forms of birth control until your doctor assures you that your vasectomy is completely effective. This may take several months until all of the sperm left in the upper part of the vas deferens is ejaculated. In approximately two to three months following the vasectomy, a semen sample is brought to an outpatient laboratory for analysis. Your doctor will call you with the results. Once your sperm count is zero, it is safe to resume sexual intercourse with no other birth control method necessary.

Q: Will I experience pain after my vasectomy?

A: A vasectomy actually causes very little pain or discomfort after the procedure and recovery is typically quick. Our surgeons utilize their extensive experience in reproductive microsurgery and minimally invasive surgical techniques to perform your vasectomy with great precision.

Q: Will I experience problems with achieving an erection or with sexual intercourse following my vasectomy?

A: No. Experiencing erectile dysfunction and low libido are common concerns men have following a vasectomy, but rest assured the procedure will not affect a man's libido, ejaculation, sexual pleasure, or erections. A vasectomy also will not affect your testosterone (male hormone) levels.

Q: Where will the procedure be performed?

A: Vasectomy is an outpatient procedure typically performed under local anesthesia in one of our offices.

Q: Do I need to prepare for the procedure?

- A:**
- Stop taking vitamin supplements, aspirin or ibuprofen one week before your vasectomy. These anti-inflammatory medications thin the blood and can cause excessive bleeding. If you are currently taking any blood thinners, please inform your doctor.
 - You may eat a light meal before your procedure.
 - You may shave your scrotum at home prior to the procedure.
 - Bring an athletic supporter to the procedure, preferably with a pouch in which you can place an ice pack, to decrease swelling.

Q: How long does it take to perform the vasectomy?

A: The procedure typically takes only 20 minutes once your physician has you comfortable and administers the local anesthetic.

Q: How long is the recovery?

A: Most patients are surprised that the procedure is quick and often causes little pain or discomfort. Shortly after the procedure, you will be able to drive home. To minimize discomfort, you may be prescribed pain relievers and using an ice pack will help minimize swelling in the area. Most men resume work in three to four days after the vasectomy.

Q: Can a vasectomy be reversed?

A: Yes. A vasectomy can be reversed in a procedure appropriately called a vasectomy reversal. Sometimes, life circumstances change and years after having a vasectomy, some men wish to be able to conceive a child naturally with their partner.

Q: Will insurance cover my vasectomy?

A: Vasectomy procedures are typically covered by insurance. However, because insurance coverage varies, we recommend that you call the customer service number on the back of your insurance card, or contact your employer's benefits department, to verify your coverage and for any questions regarding your health insurance plan.