

Patient information from Gordon Muir, Consultant Urological Surgeon

Please do not rely on this information unless you have been specifically sent this by Mr Muir
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Vasectomy

Vasectomy is a method of birth control which renders a man sterile. The operation removes a small piece of the tube between the testicle and the penis, causing a blockage to the flow of sperms.

Vasectomy is the most efficient method of all forms of birth control, but should be considered irreversible, since even though reversal can be attempted years after the operation the results cannot be guaranteed.



The operation is done under a short local anaesthetic: we use a minimally invasive technique called the "Li" method which uses only a tiny puncture in the skin of the scrotum and has been shown to have few local side effects. No skin stitches are needed. Gordon Muir has carried out over 3,000 of these operations without any emergency return to theatre, and has taught the operation to many other specialists.

Below are listed a number of questions often asked about vasectomy and which you should understand before undergoing the procedure.

Will the operation affect my sex life or orgasm?

There is no effect of vasectomy on either of these, either positive or negative. Occasionally men who have marital or sexual difficulty will seek a vasectomy in the hope that matters will improve, but the results are predictably disappointing. Very few men notice a difference in the quality or quantity of their ejaculation, since the sperms themselves constitute only a tiny part of the ejaculate.

What complications can occur?

As with any operation there is a chance of bruising or infection: this is less than one in twenty with the Li technique. If this happens, medical advice is necessary – you should contact us if there is major swelling, hotness or discharge from the wound area.

Rarely, men develop long term discomfort in the testicles after vasectomy. We do not fully understand why this problem occurs but it does seem more common in men who have had previous testicular pain or surgery, and possibly in men who are uncertain over their choice of vasectomy as a mode of contraception.

How long will I be off work for after the operation?

We usually advise a few days off work and two weeks off sports and saddles. Most men will however be comfortable enough to work and travel the day after the operation, but some develop swelling or soreness. One patient went steeple chasing two days later, which is a good advertisement for the technique but not a course of action we should recommend!

What follow up is needed?

Usually there is no skin stitch to be removed.

A sperm count is requested **at least three calendar months** after the operation to ensure sterility. A minimum of 25 ejaculations should happen before the sperm count and if you are over 40 it is probably better to ejaculate more than 30 times as older men may take longer to evacuate the residual sperms

Other methods of contraception must be used until confirmation of this sperm count being negative has been obtained. If the sperm count is positive we will advise on the timing, if needed, of a repeat sperm count.

Does vasectomy increase the risk of other diseases?

There is no proof of an increase in heart disease or testicular tumours after vasectomy, as had been suggested in the past. Equally, there seems to be no link between vasectomy and prostate cancer,

Why is a post operative sperm count required?

The remaining portion of the vas deferens inside the body can take several months to empty of sperm, so it is important to make sure the "reservoir" is empty before discarding other methods of birth control.

There is a small risk of the two ends of the vas deferens rejoining in the few months following the operation and again this will nearly always be picked up by the post operative sperm count.

While some doctors request two post vasectomy sperm counts, the medical evidence suggests that one is adequate.

Is the operation failsafe?

No operation is completely without failures! As mentioned above, early rejoining of the vas deferens can occur in less than one percent of patients. I have had two patients with this problem in over 3000 vasectomies.

Also, despite the surgeon's best efforts, nature sometimes manages to overcome the blockage years after the procedure has been carried out.

Nonetheless the late failure rate is less than one in two thousand and this makes vasectomy the most certain form of birth control.

We carry this out in outpatients and patients can go home within half an hour of the operation.

- As patients worry about cost, our fixed price package includes:
- Initial consultation
- Local anaesthesia and surgery
- Post operative care and advice
- Post operative sperm counts
- Revision surgery under local anaesthesia if needed.

Currently we offer this service at both The Shard and the Cadogan Clinic in Chelsea
Our self pay package for vasectomy in November 2023 is £2000.