

What are the risks?

A small number of people experience bleeding or infection after a vasectomy. Rest, support for the scrotum, pain relief and antibiotics resolve most problems quickly.

Occasionally sperm can leak from the ends of the cut tubes and produce small, hard lumps at the site of the procedure. With time, this can occasionally lead to spontaneous re-joining of the tubes.

There is no evidence that vasectomy increases the risk of cancer of the testes or prostate.

Can the procedure fail?

Vasectomies are 99.5% effective. In the rare circumstance where a vasectomy fails, you may stay fertile or become fertile again. This can happen if the tubes are not fully blocked off, if a third vas deferens exists, or if they grow back together. Normally this is picked up three months after the procedure, when the sperm count is done, but it can occur at any time, even many years after the vasectomy.

How do I get the procedure?

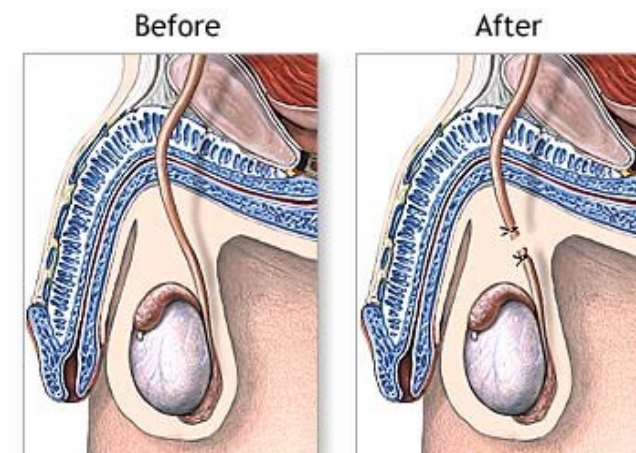
You will need a referral from Family Planning or your GP to a specialist surgeon or urologist.

For further information please call:
ph: (08) 89480144
or
visit www.fpwnt.com.au

Family Planning Welfare Association of NT
Head Office — Darwin
Unit 2, The Clock Tower,
Dick Ward Drive
Coconut Grove.
ph: 08 8948 0144

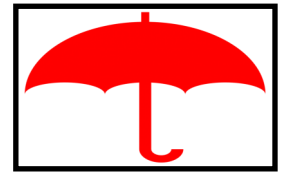
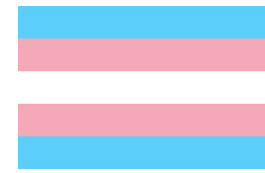
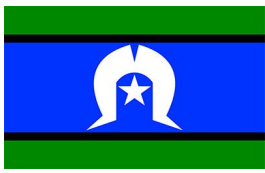
Palmerston Clinic
ph: 08 8948 0144

Vasectomy



MISSION STATEMENT

Family Planning Welfare Association of NT Inc will advocate for and provide enhanced reproductive and sexual health and well being to all Territorians. This will be achieved through the provision of best practice clinical care and contemporary education and information services.



Vasectomy

Vasectomy is a simple surgical procedure to prevent sperm travelling out of the testes and into the semen. If there are no sperm in the semen it is not possible to make someone pregnant. Vasectomy is a permanent form of contraception, which is not easily reversed if you change your mind. If you are thinking about vasectomy, you need to feel absolutely sure you don't want children in the future. Life can sometimes change unexpectedly, for example, if you begin a new relationship or lose a child. Although it is sometimes possible to reverse a vasectomy, there is no guarantee that you will be able to have a child after a reversal.

How soon will it work?

You will still have sperm in your vas deferens (the tube that carries the sperm) for some time after the procedure. It may take as many as 20 ejaculations to clear. Three months after the vasectomy, you should take a sample of your semen to a pathology lab for testing. You must continue to use another form of contraception such as condoms until these tests show your semen has no sperm in it. Your partner may decide to continue with their current method of contraception until your sperm count has been confirmed to be zero.

The procedure

A vasectomy is a minor procedure. It takes about 20-40 minutes and is usually carried out under a local anaesthetic. It is performed in your GP's or surgeon's rooms or at a hospital as a day procedure.

The doctor begins by making one or two small openings in the front of the scrotum. The doctor then cuts and seals the vas deferens connected to each testicle. The opening is closed with a stitch or by pressing the skin edges together. This is called the open procedure method.

An alternative method is the 'no-scalpel vasectomy'. In this method, one or two small punctures are made in the scrotum with fine sharp forceps and each vas deferens is cut as in the open procedure. No stitches are required for this method. Sometimes this is performed under sedation or general anaesthetic but not all clinics offer this.

Will it change how I feel?

The procedure does not affect your ability to produce semen. It will not change your sexual function or male characteristics. You will still be able to enjoy sex and ejaculation should feel the same. The only difference will be that the semen will not contain sperm.

What should I expect?

Even though the procedure only takes a short amount of time, you may be asked to spend up to two hours at the clinic where you have the vasectomy. When the anaesthetic wears off, you will probably feel some pain in the groin or scrotum and have some bruising.

Most soreness or discomfort should be relieved by using pain-killing medication, ice packs and tight-fitting supportive underpants.

After the vasectomy, you should rest for a few days and avoid any strenuous physical activity or heavy lifting that puts pressure on the groin or scrotum for one week. Normal day-to-day activity is not harmful but if your work is quite physically strenuous you may need some time off work.

The doctor performing the vasectomy will give you instructions about when you can shower or bathe, when to remove the dressing, and when you can have sexual intercourse again.

Where do the sperm go?

After the procedure, sperm will continue to be produced in the testes. They will be harmlessly absorbed by the body.