

# Considering a Vasectomy?

Many men are uncomfortable with the idea of a vasectomy, or they have questions about how it works. These facts can help you make your decision with confidence.

## What Is a Vasectomy?

- Vasectomy is a surgical procedure that provides permanent birth control for men. It is a safe and effective procedure that has satisfied male patients and their partners all over the world.
- If you and your partner are ready for permanent birth control, vasectomy should be at the top of your list of options.

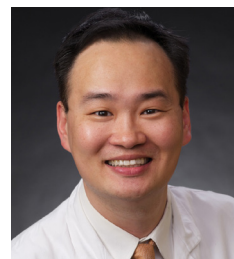
## Facts About Vasectomy

- It should be considered a permanent procedure. While procedures to reverse a vasectomy are available, they are not guaranteed. Also, reversal surgeries are generally not covered by health insurance. (Vasectomies are covered by insurance.)
- It is performed in a doctor's regular office under local anesthesia. Patients are not made unconscious by general anesthesia. Instead, just a local numbing anesthetic is used.
- It has a quick recovery period. Patients require minimal pain medication afterward and are back to normal activities at one week.
- It does not make you immediately sterile. It generally takes 2–4 months of regular sexual activity to result in sterility. After a vasectomy, patients are required to submit semen samples to confirm the absence of sperm.

## Myths About Vasectomy

- It causes erectile dysfunction. False! There is no data showing that this is true. Vasectomy does not affect the nerves or the vasculature of the penis. Therefore, it cannot affect erections.
- It causes other diseases. False! Some studies show that patients who have had a vasectomy also have a higher rate of heart disease, colon cancer, prostate cancer and a rare form of dementia. However, it has never been proven that vasectomy causes these health issues. Perhaps vasectomy patients have better healthcare habits in general—and so they are more likely to detect a disease (rather than having more disease).
- It reduces sexual desire. False! There is no data that proves that a vasectomy reduces sexual desire. Testosterone, men's main sex hormone, is transported from the testicles in the bloodstream. A vasectomy does not disrupt this process; it affects only the vasa deferentia (two tubes), which carry sperm from the testicles to the penis.

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