

# Vasectomy

Your treatment explained



To book a consultation or if you wish to gain further information about treatments that the clinic offers, please visit:

## The Cooden Clinic

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THE  
COODEN  
MEDICAL  
GROUP

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A Care Quality Commission Registered Clinic

This booklet tells you all you need to know about your vasectomy. Preparing for your appointment, what to expect on the day, and how to look after yourself following your vasectomy.

If you have any questions - before or after your appointment please call a member of our team at The Cooden Clinic on 01424 846190

### **What is a Vasectomy?**

A vasectomy, or male sterilisation is a quick and relatively painless procedure by which a small section of the tubes (vas deferens) that carry sperm from a man's testicles to the penis are cut, blocked or sealed with heat. This is to prevent sperm from reaching the semen that is ejaculated from a man's penis during sex.

The procedure is normally carried out under local anaesthetic, which means you will be awake for your outpatient procedure, meaning that you will normally be able to return home shortly after the procedure. Vasectomy is considered a permanent or an irreversible procedure, because although the procedure can be reversed it may not be successful.

### **What are the benefits of a Vasectomy?**

A man may choose to have a vasectomy if he does not want more children or has decided not to have any at all. It may be chosen as a simpler, safer and more reliable alternative to female sterilisation. Your Doctor will ask about your circumstances, and provide information and counselling as to whether this is the appropriate option for you. The other main form of contraception for men is condoms.

## **What are the possible side effects?**

Following a vasectomy, complications are rare, however, in some cases, a vasectomy can cause serious problems as outlined below

**Significant bleeding (haematoma) inside the scrotum:** this can cause the scrotum to become very swollen and painful. In severe cases further surgery may be required.

**Sperm granulomas:** sperm can leak from the site where the tubes were cut and can collect in the surrounding tissues, forming hard lumps known as sperm granulomas. The groin or scrotum may become painful and swollen either immediately or a few months after the procedure. The lumps are not normally painful and can often be treated using anti-inflammatory medication which can be prescribed by a GP. If the granulomas are particularly large or painful they may require surgical removal.

**Infection:** after a vasectomy there is the risk of developing an infection as a result of bacteria entering through the incision (cuts) made in the scrotum. It is important to keep the genital area clean and dry to minimise the risk of infection.

**Long-term testicular pain:** some men get pain in one or both of their testicles after the vasectomy. It can happen immediately, a few months or a few years after the operation. The pain may be occasional, frequent and vary from a constant dull ache to episodes of sharp, intense pain. However, for most men, the pain is quite mild and further help is not required.

**Full feeling in the testicles:** after a vasectomy some men may develop the feeling that their testicles are 'fuller' than normal. This is usually caused by the epididymis (coiled tube that rests on the back of each testicle, that helps to transport and store sperm) becoming filled with stored sperm. Any such feelings should pass naturally within a few weeks - a GP should be contacted if the feeling of fullness continues after this time.

**Fertility:** in a very small number of cases the vas deferens reconnects over a period of time. This means that the vasectomy is no longer an effective form of contraception, however, it is rare for this to happen.

### **Other points to note:**

A vasectomy has no effect on sex drive and the ability to enjoy sex. You will still have erections and ejaculate normally. The only difference is that your semen does not contain sperm.

A vasectomy does not protect against HIV infection and any other sexually transmitted infection. With any new partner you should protect yourself by using condoms.

## **Please tell your surgeon (before your surgery) if you have any of the following:**

An artificial heart valve

A coronary artery stent

A heart pacemaker or defibrillator

An artificial joint

An artificial blood-vessel graft

A neurosurgical shunt

Any other implanted foreign body

A regular prescription for warfarin, aspirin or clopidogrel (Plavix®)

A previous or current MRSA infection

A high risk of variant-CJD (if you have had a corneal transplant, a neurosurgical dural transplant or injections of human-derived growth hormone).

## **Before you leave home**

It's a good idea to have a bath or shower, but there is no need to shave or trim hair around the area.

We also advise that you wear close fitting pants or swimming trunks rather than boxer shorts or a thong. This will offer you more support and be more comfortable after your procedure.

We advise that you are accompanied home and do not drive yourself.

## **What happens at the Cooden Clinic?**

You can expect to be at The Cooden Clinic for about one hour. When you arrive you will be greeted by our receptionist who will register your arrival. You may have had a telephone consultation prior to your appointment or you may be having a consultation on the day of your procedure. Either way, we will ensure that the vasectomy procedure is explained in as much detail as you need and we will answer any questions you may have. You will be advised about how to look after yourself following your vasectomy and given information regarding your semen samples. We will also ensure we have a thorough medical history.

Your consultation is a chance for you to ask any questions at all, however small they may seem.

## **Your procedure**

Your partner is most welcome to come with you to the clinic. Unfortunately it is not possible for companions, including partners and spouses to accompany you into the treatment area or be with you during the procedure. This is to ensure that the medical team are not distracted from your care.

We understand that you may be feeling nervous and apprehensive. Our team members are there for you, so please let them know if you have any questions or worries, no matter what they are.

Your vasectomy will be performed by an experienced doctor. A nurse will also accompany you throughout. You will have a pre-operative examination to ensure that the doctor can locate the vas deferens (sperm carrying tubes).

You will have an anaesthetic injection to numb the area and the doctor will make a very small incision to detect and seal the sperm carrying tube (vas deferens). No stitches are needed. The procedure should take about 10 to 15 minutes.

We cannot, however, make the procedure completely painless. The act of picking up the tubes cause a variable degree of discomfort. This may make you feel slightly sick, sweaty or light-headed

You will relax at the centre for about half an hour after the procedure and refreshments will be provided.

Your nurse or doctor will have a chat with you before you leave, to make sure you feel well enough to go home and understand the aftercare information. You will also be given an aftercare information pack to take home with you.

## **After your procedure**

After your vasectomy we suggest you go straight home and relax. Avoid long periods of standing or walking for a few days after the procedure.

The local anaesthetic will wear off in a couple of hours, so you might feel a bit sore afterwards. If you are uncomfortable, take a regular painkiller such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.

If the area is swollen and you are uncomfortable, apply an ice pack.

Most men find they get some bruising around their testicles and this can spread to the penis and around the groin area. Anti-inflammatory pain-killers such as Ibuprofen can be helpful.

Wear close-fitting briefs or swimming trunks as they offer more support and will be more comfortable. If you prefer looser underwear you can go back to wearing this after about a week.

Keep the area dry for at least 48 hours. After this time, have a bath or shower to help remove the dressing.

A small, pea-sized lump may develop around the wound and last for a while. This is your body's natural reaction to the healing process and needs no special treatment.

The wound usually takes between one and two weeks to heal completely. In the mean time, it is best to avoid using toiletries like bath oils and talcum powder as these could irritate the area. It will heal quicker if it is kept as clean and dry as possible.

You can resume sexual activity as soon as it feels comfortable to do so although it is better to wait a few days – ensure you use contraception until we confirm that your vasectomy has been successful.

Avoid contact sports, heavy physical exercise and cycling for at least four weeks. You can start doing lighter exercise such as swimming and golf after a couple of weeks. You will also need to avoid short haul flights for 48 hours and long haul flights for 7 -10 days (or until the wound has healed).

**You are not sterile immediately after the operation.** This is because some sperms have already passed beyond the site where the tubes are tied off.

These sperms are cleared by normal ejaculation. On average, you will need 20 to 30 ejaculations to clear these sperms.

At 20 weeks after the operation, you will be asked to produce specimens of semen for examination under a microscope. Please read the instructions for production and delivery of these specimens very carefully.

If no sperms are present, you are sterile and we will write to tell you so. If there are still a few non-motile or dead sperms, you may be regarded as sterile. If there are large numbers of motile sperms, you will need to provide further specimens until you are clear.

**Until you get the “all clear” you must continue with your contraceptive precautions.**

## Testing your semen

You will need to have semen analysis that show no sperm before we can be certain that the vasectomy was successful. You will need to contact The Esperance Hospital Fertility Centre Direct Line: 01323 410333 19 weeks post procedure to book a 24 week appointment, where you will be asked to bring a sample which must be no longer than an hour old. (Full instructions will be given to you when you telephone the hospital). We can provide you with a sample pot should you require.

If you have not heard anything please contact the clinic and we will chase your appointment for you.

## Short and long term failure advice

Both vasectomy and female sterilisation are the most effective long-term methods of contraception. However, there is a very small possibility of failure, less than 1%, with either method. With regard to vasectomy this can be categorised as short-term or long-term failure.

The vasectomy procedure involves sealing the sperm-carrying tubes but, in rare cases, the tubes may join together naturally:

Short-term failure: Should semen tests carried out following the procedure demonstrate a consistent pattern of positive results, it has to be assumed that healing has taken place and a repeat procedure may be advised, which would be carried out at no extra cost.

Long-term failure: It is possible, although very rare (less than 1%) for the tubes to rejoin years after a vasectomy. Unfortunately, there is no way of predicting this in advance and the only warning sign will be an accidental pregnancy. For additional peace of mind we are able to provide yearly semen testing for a small charge.

**Complaints**

The Cooden Medical Group aims to provide the best possible service and care to all our clients. We accept however that there are occasions when standards fall short of expectation resulting in a complaint being made.

Should you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of the service or care you have received, there are a number of ways in which you can bring this to our attention:

- by telephoning the relevant centre to speak with a manager or supervisor
- in writing to Dr M Faris, Medical Director

**Correspondence**

In order to maintain confidentiality we cannot enter into any discussion or correspondence with a third party, without your permission. If you wish for us to liaise with a third party please give us your consent in writing.

Thank you for taking the trouble to read this leaflet.

We require you to sign this leaflet and bring it in with you for your consultation.

If you agree to go ahead with the scheduled procedure, you will be asked to sign a separate consent form that will be filed in your records; we can give you a copy of this consent form if you ask.

I have read this booklet and I accept the information it provides.

**Signature**.....

**Date**.....