

Considering Vasectomy?

An increasing number of NZ couples are using Vasectomy as their contraception. Thirty percent have chosen this form of contraception.

It is one of the safest forms of contraception.

Only one in 30,000 couples fall pregnant after vasectomy compared with up to one in 250 with tubal ligation and more than one in 100 per year for the contraceptive pill.

You will need a 20 minute appointment for informed consent before the operation is booked and there is no obligation or time limit before the procedure. Just ring (04) 297-3000 and ask for a pre-op vasectomy discussion appointment. A consultation fee will apply for this visit.

The procedure itself takes less than 20 minutes but 40 minutes will be booked out for you.

No heavy lifting (no more than 15kg) or vigorous work for 7 days after surgery is advised. If you have a desk job, you can go back to work the next day.

To be sure the vasectomy has worked for you you will need to have 2 semen specimens tested after around 20 ejaculations, or 3 months, whichever occurs first.

The surgery itself:

We make a single half centimeter long incision, about the same size as the non scalpel method. This is closed with steristrips.

Our method involves removing a segment of vas deferens on both sides about a half a centimeter long, cauterising both ends, tying one end and folding the top end over and tying it twice.

The pain involved is minimal.

You will feel less than 10 seconds of stinging as the local goes into the front of the scrotal skin and then after that just a little movement as we operate, but no actual pain.

Only the skin of the scotum is exposed, the rest of you covered in a sheet. About 2 hours after the operation, the local anaesthetic will gradually wear off and you will start to feel a bruised feeling as if you have had a "bit of a kick". This feeling will last for about 2 days, then should feel a bit tight in some positions for a few days. It is imperative that you follow aftercare instructions that will be provided to you to minimise any complications.

Vasectomy has to be considered permanent

Vasectomy reversal is possible, however the cost is 5-15K and the success rate is only around 20-40%, which means there is an 80% chance of failure.

Other general information:

I have been performing this procedure since 1993 and trained under Margaret Sparrow at Family Planning.

There is no physical change to the way you function or the fluid you produce after vasectomy. The sperm, which we stop the flow of, is only 2% of the ejaculation and is easily absorbed back into your body.

Vasectomy will not have any long term physical effect on performance or sexual pleasure.

If you are happy for us to, we will send a note to your own doctor after the procedure and we will notify you when you have had 2 clear specimens and can then cease your current contraceptive method.

If vasectomy is not right for you yet, your GP will help you consider the other options.

Dr Christine Coulter.