

Reversing a Vasectomy

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Document Code
UR08lite

Issued
June 2015

Expires
July 2016



This document will give you information about reversing a vasectomy. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is reversing a vasectomy?

A vasectomy is meant to be a permanent method of male contraception. Reversing a vasectomy is a procedure to rejoin the tubes that were cut during a vasectomy (see figure 1).

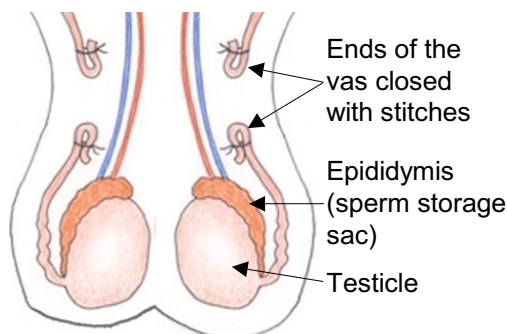


Figure 1

Bilateral vasectomy

The procedure can fail, even if the tubes are rejoined.

What are the benefits of surgery?

The aim of rejoining the tubes is to allow sperm to mix with your semen, making you fertile again.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

You may want to consider using donor sperm, either from someone you know or from a sperm bank.

It is possible for your doctor to take sperm from one of your testicles using a needle (sperm aspiration). This can be used in IVF treatment.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes an hour to 90 minutes.

Your surgeon will usually make two cuts on each side of your scrotum.

They will examine each testicle before finding and freeing up the tubes, and removing any scar tissue. Your surgeon will use an operating microscope to stitch the ends of the tubes back together.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain

- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Bleeding

2 Specific complications

- Long-term pain in your testicles
- Reduced sperm count over time

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day or the day after.

You should be able to return to work after about a week.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Your doctor will ask you to give a sample of your semen after six to eight weeks. The sample will be tested to find out if there are any sperm. If there are no sperm, it is unlikely that the operation will be a success.

If the operation fails and you and your partner still want a baby, you should discuss the alternatives with your doctor.

Summary

Reversing a vasectomy is an operation to rejoin the tubes that carry sperm from your testicles. It may make you fertile again.

Acknowledgements

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This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.