



## Colorado Mountain Medical

Doctors you know and trust

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# VASECTOMY INFORMATION PACKET

In preparation for your vasectomy, it is important that you are at our office 20 minutes prior to your scheduled procedure. Please arrive on time and allow up to 90 minutes for the appointment. If you are late, we may need to reschedule your procedure.

## VASECTOMY INFORMATION

A vasectomy is a simple surgical procedure done in the office resulting in *permanent* sterilization. The surgeon removes a small portion of the vas deferens (the tube that transports the sperm from the testicle to the penis). There are usually two vas deferens, one for each testicle.

**Do not have a vasectomy if there is any chance that you may want to have biological children in the future.**

## PROCEDURE INFORMATION

A vasectomy consists of making one or two small openings in the scrotum and then removing a part of the vas deferens from each side. Lidocaine is used for local anesthesia in the scrotum.

Occasionally, requests are received from a patient's relatives and friends to be present in procedure room during the vasectomy. **It is our policy that relatives and friends remain in the waiting room during the procedure.**

## PREPARING FOR THE VASECTOMY

Before coming to the office for your procedure, the following must be done:

- **DO NOT take aspirin or non-steroidal medications (such as Advil, Aleve, Naproxen, Excedrin, or Ibuprofen) for at least 7 days prior to the procedure.**

These medications can increase the risk of bleeding during the procedure.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) is okay to take.

- **If you are taking Coumadin or Plavix (or any other type of prescribed blood thinner) you will need to coordinate with your primary care physician for instructions on stopping and restarting before and after the vasectomy.**
- Arrange for someone to drive you home.
- Plan for three (3) days of rest and inactivity (bed rest) after your vasectomy.
- Shave the top and front of your scrotum, especially the area where the penis joins the scrotum. Do not use hair removal products or an electric shaver.
- Shower immediately prior to the procedure with antibacterial soap.
- Buy a snug fitting scrotal support, such as an athletic supporter or jock strap, and bring it with you on the day of your procedure.
- Call us if any unexpected problems arise prior to your procedure (cold, flu, infection, etc.)
- Notify us of any bleeding disorders or problems with blood clotting that you have.
- Do not fast. Please eat something before your appointment.

## **AFTER THE VASECTOMY**

Your inactivity after the surgery is extremely important, both for your own comfort and to help prevent complications. Go home immediately after the procedure and rest in bed as much as possible. Keeping the legs and hips elevated above the heart will help keep swelling and pain to a minimum. Bed rest for three days following the procedure will greatly improve your healing and shorten your recovery. If you are up too much or if you strain yourself (lifting, stretching, etc.), you will increase the risks of bleeding, pain, and swelling within the scrotum.

You will be given antibiotics to take for three days following your surgery. You will also be given pain medication to take as needed.

It is normal for the testicles and scrotum to be tender and sensitive for a few weeks after your vasectomy. However, pain medications are usually not necessary. Please do not use aspirin or aspirin compounds for at least five days after the surgery. This will help reduce the risk of bleeding. Tylenol (acetaminophen) is okay to take.

The sutures will dissolve or fall out within a month. They do not need to be removed. Please keep the incisions dry for at least 12 hours. After this time, you may shower. Do not submerge in water until you notice that the sutures have dissolved (usually 3-4 weeks).

Do not have sex for one week after your vasectomy. **The vasectomy will not be effective immediately. There will still be sperm in your system that can cause pregnancy. It will take at least 15 to 20 ejaculations and 8 to 12 weeks of healing before the sperm**

are eliminated. Please do not assume you are sterile. During this waiting period, we recommend you use other forms of birth control to prevent pregnancy.

**A semen analysis (to test for any remaining sperm) should be performed after 12 weeks, and during those 12 weeks it is recommended to have done at least 20 ejaculations. Sometimes even after 12 weeks, a semen analysis may still show sperm. If this is the case, the doctor will recommend a repeat semen analysis, usually several weeks later. You should continue to use other birth control methods until you hear from our office staff that you are clear to proceed without other birth control methods.** The cost of your semen analysis is billed separately through Vail Health. If you are interested in getting a direct price quote, you may call the lab department at 970-479-7280.

### **INCISION CARE**

The day after the procedure, begin cleaning the incisions twice a day. First clean the area with antibacterial soap, then apply a small amount of antibiotic ointment (such as Neosporin or Polysporin) with your finger. No other dressing is required.

If you have no other apparent problems three days after the procedure, you should be able to resume normal activities, but please be cautious the first week. Please do not exercise for one week after the vasectomy. Most of the healing takes place during the first week and the incisions may take as long as 3-4 weeks to heal completely.

### **SEXUAL FUNCTION**

A vasectomy should NOT have any observable effect on your sexual function.

- Ejaculation: The testicles contribute only the sperm to the ejaculate, and this comprises about 2% to 5% of the total ejaculate volume. The remainder is from the seminal vesicles, prostate, and urethra.
- There should be no changes in your ability to have an erection or engage in intercourse.
- **NOTE: Do not have sex for one week after your vasectomy.**

### **RISKS**

ANY surgery involves risk. It is extremely important you understand the possible risks associated with vasectomy.

The major risks with vasectomy are:

- Re-canalization: The ends of the vas deferens will try to join back together as they heal. If this happens, you will still be fertile. The chances of this happening are less than 1%.
- Bleeding: If bleeding does occur, one or both sides of the scrotum can enlarge 2 to 3 times their normal size, and it may take weeks or even months for the swelling to disappear.
- Chronic pain: Some patients develop a dull, aching pain that is permanent. This may not start until 6-12 months after the vasectomy. This pain can result from sperm forming cysts that can enlarge and swell intermittently after the surgery.
- Infection: As with bleeding, an infection in the scrotum or its contents may take weeks or even months to heal.

The overall risks of these problems developing are 3% to 5%, but your cooperation postoperatively (bed rest for 2 to 3 days and scrotal support) will minimize these risks.

Be sure you have read this information completely before coming in for a vasectomy. If you have further questions or any hesitation about this procedure, please call and reschedule your appointment for a vasectomy consultation. Please bring your partner to this consultation so that your doctor may speak frankly about the procedure to both of you and answer any of your concerns.