



What are the alternatives to vasectomy?

Vasectomy is a permanent form of contraception (birth control). Some people later regret this decision. For example, if your partner is currently pregnant but loses the pregnancy, you may wish to try to conceive another child in the future. There are permanent and non-permanent alternatives to vasectomy available. If you change your mind after vasectomy, you still have the options of:

- Vasectomy reversal to reconnect the tubes (vas deferens) that carry sperm from a testicle into the semen so your semen will have sperm again.
- Finding sperm surgically and attempting conception with in vitro fertilization. **In vitro fertilization** is when eggs are collected from the ovaries and fertilized by sperm in a lab.

These options are not always successful, and they may be expensive.

What happens after a vasectomy?

- You must refrain from ejaculation for approximately 1 week after vasectomy.
- You are **not** immediately **sterile** (having no sperm in your semen). You will need another form of contraception or protection until your doctor is certain that the vas deferens tubes are blocked. This is done by **post-vasectomy semen analysis**.
 - You will need to drop off a semen sample (taken at home within 2 hours of drop off) at 8 and 16 weeks after vasectomy.
 - **You must continue using protection** until we have confirmed that you are sterile after your 16-week semen analysis.

- You may stop using other methods of birth control or protection when these two semen samples show no sperm, or rare non-moving sperm.
- Even after it is confirmed that your vas deferens are blocked, vasectomy is not 100% reliable in preventing pregnancy. **The risk of pregnancy after vasectomy is approximately 1 in 2,000 for people whose post-vasectomy semen analysis shows no sperm, or rare non-moving sperm.**
- Repeat vasectomy is necessary in about 1 out of 100 (1%) of vasectomies. Vasectomy is considered a failure if any moving sperm are seen on semen analysis at 6 months after vasectomy. In this case, you can consider a repeat vasectomy.

What are the risks of vasectomy?

- The rates of surgical complications such as **hematoma** (a pool of clotted or partially clotted blood in an organ, tissue or part of the body usually from a broken blood vessel) and **infection** are 1-2 out of 100 (1-2%).
- Botherome long term pain in the **scrotum** (sack that contains the testicles) occurs after vasectomy in about 1-2 out of 100 (1-2%) of people. Few of these people require additional medications or surgery.

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Reference: American Urological Society *Vasectomy Guideline* (2015).

<https://www.auanet.org/guidelines/vasectomy-guideline>

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