

## About Your Procedure

### Vasectomy

*This handout explains how to prepare for and what to expect after having a vasectomy.*

#### What is a vasectomy?

A *vasectomy* is a minor surgery for male sterilization. It is often done as a form of birth control.

During the procedure, your *vasa deferentia* (the tubes that connect your testes with your urethra) are cut and sealed or tied. This keeps sperm from entering the seminal stream (*ejaculate*).

Vasectomies are usually done in a doctor's office or hospital.



*Talk with your doctor if you have any questions about your vasectomy after reading this handout.*

#### How should I prepare?

- For **10 days before** your procedure, do **not** take any aspirin or aspirin-like drugs such as ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn). These drugs may cause excess bleeding during and after your procedure.
- If you plan to take a *sedative* (calming medicine) such as Valium 1 hour before your procedure:
  - **You must arrange for a responsible adult to drive you to and from the procedure.** You will not be allowed to drive yourself home. It is not legal or safe.
  - **You must sign all consent forms in advance.** You cannot sign consent forms if you are under the influence of a sedative.

#### On the Day of Surgery

- Please thoroughly shave your **entire** scrotum. This will make you more comfortable during the procedure.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing.

- You may bring an athletic support (jock strap) with you to wear home after your procedure. We will provide one for you if you do not bring one.
- You may eat a light meal before your procedure.

## What to Expect

Before your vasectomy:

- Your nurse will clean the area around your scrotum with a warm liquid.
- You will receive a long-acting *anesthetic* (numbing medicine).
- You will be awake during the procedure.

The procedure will take only 20 to 30 minutes to complete.

## After the Procedure

### Pain Medicine

- If your doctor prescribes Vicodin for pain, you may take it as directed. Do **not** drive while you are taking prescription pain medicines.
- For mild discomfort, you can take Extra-Strength Tylenol, 1 to 2 pills every 6 hours as needed.
- **Do not take acetaminophen (Tylenol) while you are taking Vicodin.** If you are given pain medicine other than Vicodin, ask your doctor or nurse if it is safe to take acetaminophen while you are taking your prescription pain medicine.
- You may also take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn), 1 to 2 pills every 4 hours to reduce swelling and pain.

### Self-care

- To reduce swelling, use cold packs on your groin area off and on for 24 hours after your surgery:
  - Place a thin towel on your groin area and lay the cold pack (such as a bag of frozen peas) on top of the towel. Do **not** place the cold pack directly on your skin.
  - Leave the cold pack on for 20 minutes, then off for 20 minutes. Keep doing this for the first 24 hours after your procedure. Keep your scrotum cool, **NOT** cold.
- After 24 hours, remove **all** bandages from inside the athletic support.
- Keep using the athletic support for at least 3 days.
- It is OK to shower after you remove the bandages. Be sure to dry the area gently but fully.

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

☐ **Men's Health Center**  
UW Medical Center-  
Roosevelt  
4245 Roosevelt Way N.E.  
3rd floor  
Seattle, WA 98105

Call 206.598.6358  
weekdays from 8 a.m. to  
5 p.m. After hours and on  
weekends or holidays,  
call this same number or  
go to the Emergency  
Room.

Find more information at:  
<http://depts.washington.edu/uroweb>

☐ **UW Eastside Specialty Center**  
3100 Northup Way  
Bellevue, WA 98004  
Call 425.646.7777  
weekdays from 7 a.m. to  
8 p.m. and Saturdays  
from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

## Physical Symptoms

It is normal to have:

- Slight swelling of your scrotum.
- Very mild bleeding or drainage from the incision site.
- Bruising of your scrotum and the base of your penis. This should go away in about a week.

## Activity

- After 24 hours, or when you feel better, you can resume normal, **light** activity.
- After 4 days, you can resume more vigorous activities such as jogging or weight lifting. Let your body be your guide. If an activity feels uncomfortable, slow down or stop and rest.
- You may return to work when you feel comfortable enough to do so. Most men return to work within 1 to 2 days.
- After 7 days, you may resume sexual activity.

**IMPORTANT: Even after a vasectomy, you may have sperm in your semen for 3 to 6 months or longer.** If you want to avoid pregnancy, you **MUST** use a reliable form of birth control until your follow-up semen analysis shows there is no sperm in your semen.

## Follow-up Visit for Semen Analysis

- You will need to come to our clinic 3½ months after your vasectomy to provide a semen sample.
- You must not ejaculate for 2 to 5 days before this appointment.
- Call the UW Men's Health Center at 206.598.6358 to schedule this visit.
- Call the Men's Health Center at 206.598.6358 for your semen analysis results. These will be available within 1 to 2 days.

## When to Call the Clinic

Call the Men's Health Center, or if it is after business hours, go directly to the Emergency Room, if you have:

- A lot of redness, swelling, bruising, pain, or bulging at your incision site
- A fever higher than 101°F (38.3°C)
- Shaking or chills
- Allergic reactions to drugs, such as hives, rash, nausea or vomiting