

# Vasectomy Reversal (Vasovasotomy or Vasoepididymostomy)

SUNA Postoperative Care Task Force

## Overview

A vasectomy reversal is offered to men who have had a vasectomy when they wish to add to their family or have children with a new partner.

## Indications

This is a procedure offered to men after they have had a vasectomy and wish to restore their fertility.

There are two common ways that your surgeon may perform this surgery:

- Two scrotal incisions and the use of an operating microscope.
- Two scrotal incisions and the use of magnification glasses.

This surgery may be done under a local or general anesthesia, and is usually done in the operating room.

## Possible Risks

Every surgery has some risk of infection, but it is rare with this surgery. Any infection is treated on a case-by-case basis. You can expect bruising and scrotal swelling that will start 18 to 24 hours after the surgery, and gradually decrease over the following 1 to 2 weeks.

## What to Expect Before Surgery

- You may need to have lab tests, X-rays, and electrocardiograms (EKGs) completed before your surgery if ordered by your surgeon.
- You may be asked to attend a preoperative clinic before surgery.
- If you start any new medications before your surgery, please contact the urology office as soon as possible to discuss whether the medication may be taken up to and including the day of the surgery.

## Preoperative Instructions

- Plan to wear loose clothing and loose underwear on the day of your procedure to help with the post-operative dressing and your comfort level.
- Do not shave your genitals for 2 weeks in advance of your scheduled surgery date.

## What to Expect After Surgery

This is an outpatient procedure. You will be discharged home after the surgery has been completed. You must bring a driver with you to this surgery. You will not be allowed to drive yourself home.

- Some men receive a prescription for 7 to 14 days of antibiotics at discharge, depending on their other medical conditions and risk for infection. If you receive antibiotics, please be sure to take all of the pills.
- Once you are home, you may shower. You may wash your incisions gently with soap and water and pat dry, do not rub.
- Do not take a bath or use a hot tub for 7 days.
- Do not drive any motor vehicle or operate motorized equipment for at least 24 hours after your procedure or while taking narcotic (opioid) pain medications.
- Do not drink alcohol for at least 24 hours after the procedure.
- You may continue your normal diet.
- You may return to work after 48 hours, as long as your job is sedentary and does not involve heavy lifting.
- It is normal to feel both mild pain and swelling of the scrotum. You may notice a small amount of drainage from the incision area that can continue for several days. It is okay to cover the area with a gauze pad.

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*We hope you and all your family members may benefit from these handouts.*

- **You must not ejaculate until you have been cleared by your surgical team. This can be 2 to 6 weeks after the procedure. These surgical attachments are very delicate and could be damaged by any ejaculation before full healing has occurred.**
- Please limit your activity until your postoperative visit to promote faster healing. This includes avoiding any heavy lifting, exercise, and sexual activity.
- Please avoid swimming/soaking in any pools, baths, hot tubs, etc., until your initial postoperative visit (usually 14 days after your surgery).
  - Do not engage in any activities in the straddle position (bicycle, motorcycle, snow mobile, etc.) until cleared at your post-operative visit.
- You may resume sexual activity when cleared by your surgical team. This can be 2 to 6 weeks after the procedure.
- Prescription pain medication may be provided. You may also take Extra-Strength Tylenol, Motrin, or Advil as needed for any pain or discomfort after the first 2 to 3 days. Follow the package directions regarding dose.

### When to Call the Clinic

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- Pain that is not relieved by pain medication.
- Continued heavy bleeding or drainage.
- Swelling or redness that is not getting better or gets worse.
- Foul odor.
- Fever over 101 degrees F.

You will be given an appointment to return for a postoperative visit approximately 2 weeks after surgery, at which time your progress will be evaluated. You may also be scheduled for a follow-up semen analysis 6 weeks to 3 months after the procedure. Men can have sperm return to their ejaculation any time after the surgery, but it can take 9 to 18 months, so please consider an alternate method of birth control as needed.

### Resources

- Keller, A.K., Howard, M.M., & Jensen, J.B. (2021). Complications after scrotal surgery – Still a major issue? *Scandinavian Journal of Urology*, 55(5), 404-407. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21681805.2021.1884131>
- Schlegel, P.N., Sigman, M., Collura, B., De Jonge, C.J., Eisenberg, M.L., Lamb, D.J., Mulhall, J.P., Niederberger, C., Sandlow, J.I., Sokol, R.Z., Spandorfer, S.D., Tanrikut, C., Treadwell, J.R., Oristaglio, J.T., & Zini, A. (2021). Diagnosis and treatment of infertility in men: AUA/ASRM guideline part I. *The Journal of Urology*, 205(1), 36-43. <https://doi.org/10.1097/JU.00000000000001521>

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