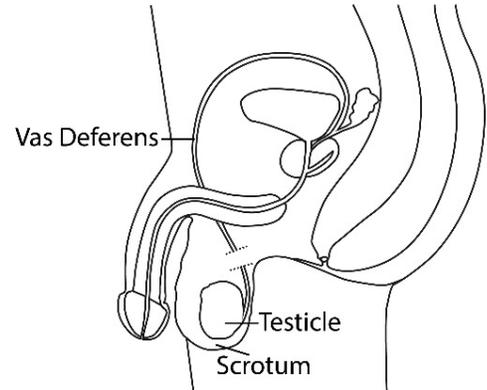


# Vasectomy

## What is a vasectomy?

A vasectomy is a **permanent** type of birth control. It's a minor surgery where tubes (vas deferens) that carry sperm from the testicles into the semen are partially removed or blocked. Without sperm, pregnancy can't happen.

A vasectomy is covered by healthcare insurance, but a reversal isn't. You must be sure you want it done. Reversal surgery doesn't always work.



## How well does a vasectomy work?

- Vasectomy doesn't work right away. Use another form of birth control (e.g., condoms, hormonal birth control) until tests show no sperm in the semen. This may take weeks or several months. Follow the instructions of your health care provider.
- Think about getting **emergency contraception** for your partner(s) to help prevent pregnancy if you had sex before confirming that there is no sperm.
- Once no sperm is confirmed by lab test, the risk of pregnancy is 1 in 2000.
- A vasectomy doesn't protect you from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or HIV.

## How do I get a vasectomy?

You can make an appointment yourself with a doctor who does the procedure, or have your health care provider refer you.

## How is a vasectomy done?

A vasectomy takes about 30 minutes. It's often done while you are awake. Freezing medicine is injected into the sac (scrotum) that holds your testicles. One or two small openings are made. Each tube is gently pulled through the small opening. A small section of each tube is partially removed or blocked. The tube is then reinserted, and the opening is closed and covered with a bandage.

## What are the benefits of a vasectomy?

- Is one of the safest, most effective forms of birth control.
- It's private and permanent.
- It's safer than a tubal ligation.

A vasectomy will **not** affect:

- your hormones
- your interest in sex
- your ability to have an erection
- the feeling you get while having sex
- the amount of fluid in your ejaculate (cum)
- the risk of prostate or testicular cancer; heart disease, high blood pressure or stroke; dementia

## What are the side effects of a vasectomy?

All surgery has some risks. Rarely, after a vasectomy you might have bleeding, infection, pain, bruising, or swelling. Talk to your health care provider.

## Did you know?

- You have the right to decide to have sex or not. Talk with your partner(s) about consent.
- There's an 85% chance of becoming pregnant within one year if no birth control is used for vaginal sex.
- Use a condom every time you have sex (oral, vaginal, anal). Condoms help prevent pregnancy, STIs and HIV.
- You can lower your risk of HIV by taking HIV prevention medication. Many Albertans can get it for free. Visit [www.prepalberta.ca](http://www.prepalberta.ca) to find out more.
- Transgender and gender diverse people who have a uterus can use hormonal birth control. It can help prevent pregnancy and make periods lighter and less painful.

## Websites

- [ahs.ca/srh](http://ahs.ca/srh)
- [ReadyorNotAlberta.ca](http://ReadyorNotAlberta.ca)
- [TeachingSexualHealth.ca](http://TeachingSexualHealth.ca)
- [myhealth.alberta.ca](http://myhealth.alberta.ca)
- [sexandu.ca](http://sexandu.ca)

For 24/7 nurse advice and general health information, call Health Link at **811**.



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