

# NORTHERN MICHIGAN UROLOGY, P.C.

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*James M. Howard, M.D. Howard M. Topley, M.D. John W. Hall, M.D.*

## SATELITE OFFICES:

617 N. Court St. 573 N. Bradley Street 220 Burdette 511 Ashmun, Ste 102  
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## VASECTOMY COUNSELING

There are several points that are very important and we would like to make these stand out in your mind.

1. You should consider a vasectomy a permanent form of birth control. You may have heard that we do reverse vasectomies however, the pregnancy rate after the reversal is between 60% and 80% depending on whose series you read. This obviously means that between 20% and 40% of the people who desire a vasectomy reversal will still not be able to have any children, despite the reversal procedure. You should, therefore, consider a vasectomy as a permanent irreversible form of birth control.
2. You should understand that **you are not sterile immediately** following a vasectomy. We are going to divide the vas in the scrotum, which is the easiest point at which to perform the procedure. The vas, however, runs up the inguinal canal and behind the bladder and prostate to insert in the base of the penis. The entire length of the vas is a storage area for sperm, and the entire area above the point of the vasectomy still contains many live sperm. You are, therefore, as fertile as ever immediately following a vasectomy. You must clean out the portion of the vas above the point of disruption before you will be considered sterile. As a result, you must continue some form of birth control following a vasectomy. We would like to check a **sperm count eight weeks after the procedure to see if you have completely cleaned out the sperm from the vas.** If the sperm count at eight weeks is 0, indicating that no sperm are present in the system, then a letter will be sent to you indicating that you are sterile and, therefore, free to stop using other methods of birth control. I stress to you that you not consider yourself sterile until you have received this letter. The reason being, it is not unusual at eight weeks for men to still have sperm present in the vas, and if this is the case, a letter will be sent to you stating this. If sperm are still present following your first sperm check, then bring us a second specimen four weeks following the first one. You should continue to bring us a specimen every four weeks until you receive a letter stating that your sperm screen is negative. It is not unusual for men to take 8, 12, or 16 weeks or even longer to clean out the vas. The important point to keep in mind is that you not use time as an indicator of sterility but **prove that you are sterile** by a letter received from us stating so. The costs of the sperm

screens are included in the cost of the vasectomy until you obtain a negative screen. There is a small fee for any additional screens after that point. The reason we are so concerned about proper follow-up is that there is a 1% to 2% chance of spontaneous reversal of the vasectomy. This is nature working at its best, and in 1% to 2% of the cases, nature reconnects the vas following the vasectomy. This usually occurs within the eight weeks and, therefore, it is imperative for you to have follow-up specimens to check the success of your vasectomy. This obviously means that vasectomy is 98% to 99% effective and, therefore, makes it one of the most effective forms of birth control available; it is considered, perhaps, the safest form of birth control as well. There have been reports in the literature of delayed reversal of vasectomies, which have occurred months or years later. These cases are not well documented in all instances and the overall rate of this happening in a delayed manner is less than ½ of 1%. Nonetheless, it would be a good idea for you to have another sperm specimen checked in 6 to 12 months after your vasectomy, even though you had one normal sperm screen shortly following your vasectomy. Overall, a vasectomy is a very safe and effective form of birth control, as long as proper follow-up is adhered to.

3. The procedure itself is done in the office under localized Xylocaine anesthetic. We recommend that you **stay off any blood thinning** medications five days prior to your procedure. Below is a list of aspirin and combinations that you need to stop prior to the procedure.
4. For your own comfort, we suggest that you try to schedule your vasectomy at a time when you have two or three days off to be able to go home and lay flat in bed after the procedure to minimize the amount of swelling and associated discomfort. The rationale is as follows: When a person is standing up and walking around, the testicles are obviously hanging down. Gravity aids in the flow of swelling after any surgical procedure, and if you are standing for long periods of time, you will probably note more swelling and, therefore, more discomfort. This is not to say that you cannot be up walking around doing what you want to, but it does mean that, if you do not have to be up, you will probably feel better if you spend some time in bed. I would strongly advise that you not undertake any vigorous exercise or activity and especially not plan on any heavy lifting for approximately 7-10 days following the vasectomy, since this will result in increased discomfort.
5. There are certain minor complications that are possible following any surgical procedure, and this is true of a vasectomy as well. We have already discussed the **1% to 2% chance of a vasectomy reversal**, and this can be guarded against with proper follow-up as previously stated. We have also already discussed **pain and swelling and how to minimize that**. The third thing would be a **wound infection**, and these are not common but when

occur are generally mild. A wound infection usually shows up as a failure of the small incisions to heal by the time the absorbable stitches have fallen out. If you note that the wound edges are separated when the stitches have fallen out, then this most likely represents a wound infection, and you should contact our office. We will phone in a prescription for an antibiotic for you and, generally, these incisions close on their own without further treatment.

6. Occasionally, it is necessary for us to reschedule your vasectomy from the original appointment time due to urgent add-on surgeries. We ask for your patience and cooperation if this becomes necessary. Please give us all telephone numbers where you can be reached. We require a 24 hour notification of cancellation of your vasectomy appointment. **If you fail to give us the 24 hour notice a \$75.00 refundable deposit will be required prior to rescheduling.**
7. The cost of a vasectomy is **\$700.00**. Blue Cross Blue Shield and Priority Health patients are responsible for any uncovered portion of the fee on the day of service. All patients with commercial insurance must pay the entire fee in full on the date of service. If you have insurance we will file the claim for you, any reimbursement to us from the insurance company will be given back to you. If you have any questions regarding billing for the vasectomy please contact our office.
8. After reading this information you may call our office to schedule the procedure. Vasectomies can be scheduled at any of our five (5) office locations. Please have your insurance information available, as we will need this for scheduling.

Phone 231-487-2270

Toll free 877-668-7656

Hours 8:30 – 5:00 Monday – Friday

## ASPIRIN AND COMBINATIONS

**Do not use aspirin or any products containing aspirin or any blood thinning medications for 7 days prior to procedure. If you are unsure about any of your current medications please contact your primary physician or pharmacist.**

### **STOP ALL MEDICATIONS LISTED BELOW:**

Advil  
Alka Seltzer Effervescent Antacid & Pain Reliever  
Aleve  
All Arthritis Pain Reliever  
Aggrenox  
Ascriptin  
BC Powder  
Bayer  
Bufferin  
Coumadin  
Ecotrin  
Empirin  
Exederin  
Heparin  
Ibuprofen  
Lovenox  
Motrin  
Naprosyn  
4-way Cold Tablets  
Measurin  
Midol  
Momentum  
Norwich Aspirin  
Plavix  
Ticlid  
Ursinus Inlay Tabs  
Vanquish

**Tylenol** is okay to take.