

## Gynaecological Conditions Patient information Leaflet

### Vasectomy: Your questions answered

#### Summary

- How long will I have to wait for a vasectomy once I have been referred by my GP?
- What does the operation actually involve?
- Is the operation irreversible?
- Will I be fit to return to work after the operation or drive home?
- Is it normal to experience discomfort after the operation?
- What should I do if I experience increased swelling, pain, bleeding, wound discharge or generally feel unwell several hours after my operation?
- After I have had the operation, when will it be okay for me to resume sexual intercourse?
- How soon after the operation do I need to submit samples of my sperm?
- When will I be able to stop using contraception?

#### **Q: How long will I have to wait for a vasectomy once I have been referred by my GP?**

Your GP will forward the referral letter to the Vasectomy Administrator at the PCT offices who will write to you to confirm receipt of your request and add your name to the waiting list. Once your name is at the top of the waiting list, the Administrator will contact you by telephone to set a date for a pre-operative consultation (which take place on Monday mornings between 9 and 11.15am for 15 mins) when you will meet with the Consultant who will provide information regarding the procedure, discuss any concerns with you, etc. The Administrator may also at this time set a date for surgery (currently taking place on Wednesday mornings between 9 and 12).

#### **Q: What does the operation actually involve?**

The scrotum is shaved and cleaned and a local anaesthetic is injected to completely numb the area. The operation is performed through two small incisions in the scrotum when the tubes (Vas) which carry sperm from the testes to the semen are cut and tied. There will be some stitching which will be dissolvable and will dissolve within a few days. The procedure takes about half an hour and should have no adverse effect on your sexual performance and you are unlikely to notice any difference afterwards.

#### **Q: Is the operation irreversible?**

The operation must be considered permanent as a reversal may be impossible and is not available on the NHS. There is a slight possibility of the tubes joining together again and sperm entering the semen. This is most likely to happen within the first four months and it is for this reason that we ask you to provide semen specimens at 12 and 16 weeks after your operation.

**Q: Will I be fit to return to work after the operation or drive home?**

Please arrange to be collected by car as we do not advise you to drive after being given Local Anaesthetic. We would advise you to return home and rest for the remainder of the day and to avoid carrying out any strenuous activities (such as building work, lifting children, etc) up to 5 days following your operation.

**Q: Is it normal to experience discomfort after the operation?**

Once the Local Anaesthetic has worn off you may experience some discomfort. There may be some swelling and bruising of the scrotum which can last about 10 days. Therefore, we would advise you to purchase over the counter painkillers prior to undergoing the operation and also to wear supportive underwear.

We advise you to shower daily and keep the wound clean and dry.

**Q: What should I do if I experience increased swelling, pain, bleeding, wound discharge or generally feel unwell several hours after my operation?**

If you experience any such problems before 6pm, please contact ground floor reception, Minor Ops Unit on 01273 501 146 and they will ask a clinician to contact you. After 6pm, please do not hesitate to contact Brightdoc on 01273 687 728 or alternatively attend the casualty department, Sussex County Hospital, Eastern Road, Brighton.

**Q: After I have had the operation, when will it be okay for me to resume sexual intercourse?**

You may resume sexual intercourse as soon as it is comfortable but must ensure that you continue to use contraception until after 2 clear sperm results have been received.

**Q: How soon after the operation do I need to submit samples of my sperm?**

12 weeks after the operation, you will be asked to produce a semen specimen into a container which will be given to you at your pre-operative consultation, together with a laboratory form for you to take to the Clinical Pathology department at the County. You will be asked to produce another specimen 4 weeks later and again take this to the same department as before.

**Q: When will I be able to stop using contraception?**

You will be notified by your Consultant when 2 sperm free specimens have been received; only then, will you be able to stop using contraception. If you have not been notified 3 weeks after taking your second specimen to the lab, please contact Jo Matthews on 01273 296 542.

**If you have any worries or questions about your operation, please feel free to telephone Jo Matthews on 01273 296 542.**