

# **DENBY STEELE**

## **Urologist**

### **Post vasectomy information**

#### **Post-vasectomy care**

The local anaesthetic wears off in an hour or two after which there will be some mild discomfort. Simple analgesics such as paracetamol will help if required. Rest and an ice pack or frozen peas for 20 minutes then off for 40 minutes several times will minimize bruising and swelling which are then usually mild. Tight underpants provide useful scrotal support. Showering the following day is allowed and the small puncture wound can be left uncovered when the Band-Aid dressing comes off in a couple of days. If doing a physical job or standing a lot, a day or two off work is recommended and avoidance of any strenuous activity for several more days if possible to maximize the chance a quick and smooth recovery. A hot pack for 20 minutes at a time can be useful if there is discomfort after a couple of days. Resumption of sexual intercourse should be delayed until swelling and discomfort has subsided after a week or two.

#### **Post-vasectomy testing**

A single negative sperm count after the vasectomy is required to ensure success of the procedure. A specimen container and pathology form are provided after the vasectomy for testing. This should be performed about three months after the vasectomy when 80% of men will have cleared all sperm. If performed earlier at 2 months only 60% of men will be clear. Specimen collection involves either ejaculating into the provided specimen container or emptying a condom into the container after ejaculation. This together with the request form is dropped into the chosen pathology laboratory collection centre. An overnight delay between specimen production and lodgment is acceptable. Men who still have a few dead sperm shown at testing will need further tests at monthly intervals until a negative result is obtained. Special clearance may be given if 2 consecutive tests show no motile sperm, the concentration of non-motile sperm is <10,000/ml and it is at least 7 months post-vasectomy. On receipt of your result from the pathology laboratory you will be sent a letter informing you of the result with a further form if required for another test. Until you have been notified of clearance, alternate methods of contraception should continue to be used. If you are not notified of your result within 10 days please ring for this.

#### **Risks of vasectomy**

The amount of post-operative swelling, bruising, discomfort and time to resolution varies. Very occasionally a large scrotal swelling or haematoma representing internal bleeding is seen but this is very rare and settles with time. Infection, a very uncommon complication and characterized by a red swollen painful scrotum, often with a discharging wound would require antibiotics. Rarely, even many years after the vasectomy, the epididymis, the delicate structure just behind the testis where sperm mature, becomes thickened and tender probably as a result of distension. Any sperm leaking out of the end of the vas deferens or the epididymis can cause an inflammatory reaction and result in a small pea sized tender lump called a sperm granuloma. These results are nothing serious just an uncommon annoyance rarely requiring treatment. Vasectomy has no effect on urinary function or physical effect on sexual function apart from causing infertility. Ejaculation is not noticeably changed as the sperm previously contributed a very small volume to the ejaculate. There is no evidence or reasonable suggestion that vasectomy predisposes to testicular or prostate cancer or any other serious conditions. There is an initial failure rate in large series between 1:500 and 1:2,000 which would be picked up on the routine post-vasectomy sperm testing. There is also a 2:300,000 chance of late re-canalization and failure years after a clear sperm count. Periodic sperm counts over the years could check for this minute risk if concerned.

***This general information is provided to supplement not to replace individual consultations.***

***175 Ward Street North Adelaide 5006 Ph: 8267 2200 rooms@denbysteel.com.au***

***www.denbysteel.com.au Copyright 2008***