



OFFICE OF POPULATION AFFAIRS

Female Sterilization

THE FACTS



Female Sterilization THE FACTS



Quick Facts

Effectiveness in Preventing Pregnancy:

- Out of 100 women who have a sterilization procedure each year, less than one may become pregnant.

STI Protection:

- No

Office Visit Required:

- Yes, done by a health care provider as an outpatient procedure (you go home the same day).

What is female sterilization?

Female sterilization permanently prevents women from becoming pregnant. There are two different procedures to achieve this goal, tubal ligation and tubal implants. They both work by blocking the fallopian tubes (tubes that lead from women's ovaries into the uterus or womb) so that sperm cannot meet with and fertilize an egg.

Because these methods cannot be undone, they are only recommended for women who are sure they never want to have a baby or who do not want to have more children.

Tubal ligation: The fallopian tubes are cut, sealed, or tied. With this method, very tiny cuts (called incisions) are made in the abdomen or belly. This is also known as having “tubes tied.” Surgical sterilization works to prevent pregnancy right away.



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Tubal implant: A very small spring-like coil is placed into each fallopian tube. The coils cause scar tissue to form in the tubes, thereby blocking the tubes. This method does not involve cuts or incisions. Instead, a health care provider uses a thin tube to thread the small coils through the vagina and uterus into the fallopian tubes, where the coils will stay.

With the tubal implant, it will take up to three months for the scar tissue to fully block the tubes. So, it is important to use a back-up type of birth control (like a condom or the birth control shot) until your health care provider says it is not needed. You will go back to the health center or office for an exam and be checked to make sure the coils are in the right place and the tubes are blocked. This may require a special type x-ray where dye is placed into the uterus to make sure the tubes are blocked.

How do I get it?



Female sterilization is a relatively simple outpatient surgery done in a health center, doctor's office, or hospital. It can be performed under local or general anesthesia, depending on the method used to perform sterilization. You will go home the same day.

To search for a family planning center near you, go to <http://www.hhs.gov/opa/>

How effective is it?

Out of 100 women who have a sterilization procedure each year, less than one may become pregnant.



Advantages of female sterilization

- Safe and highly effective approach to preventing pregnancy
- Lasts a lifetime, so no need to worry about birth control again



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- Quick recovery
- No significant long-term side effects
- Your male partner doesn't have to know about it or do anything different.

Drawbacks of female sterilization

- Does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV
- Some risk of infection, pain, or bleeding
- Very rarely, the tubes can grow back together. When this happens there is a risk for pregnancy. In some cases, this leads to tubal or ectopic pregnancy-- when the pregnancy happens in the fallopian tubes, which is a life-threatening condition.
- Some women later change their mind and wish they could have a child or additional children.



Sources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Unintended Pregnancy Prevention: Contraception](#)

"Contraceptive Technology," Robert A. Hatcher, MD, MPH et. al., 20th revised edition, Contraceptive Technology Communications Inc., 2011.

Food and Drug Administration

- [Birth Control: Medicines to Help You](#)

Office on Women's Health

- [Permanent Birth Control Methods](#)

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