

# Permanent Birth Control (Sterilization)

**Female Sterilization:** Blocks or cuts the Fallopian tubes so that eggs cannot meet sperm. For females, “tubal ligation” or “tubal sterilization” is the method used.

## How does it work?

- Doctors reach the tubes through one or two small cuts in the belly. Then, bands or clips are put on the tubes or a piece of each tube is taken out.

## How well will it work?

- This method works very well. It is about 98-99% effective, depending on the method.

## What is the cost?

- It is covered by most insurance plans and Medicaid (if over age 21).
- If not covered by insurance, it can cost \$1500 to \$6000.

### Pros:

- Lowers the worry of getting pregnant.
- Offers permanent birth control that works very well.
- Some methods can be done right after giving birth.
- Works right away.

### Cons:

- Does not protect you from HIV and STIs (infections you can get from sex).
- It is permanent and it cannot be reversed.
- You may feel regret.
- You may have some pain afterwards and need a day or two to get better.

**This method must be done in a hospital operating room, which comes with risks such as:**

- Infection
- Bleeding
- Bad reactions to anesthesia
- Injury to organs in the stomach area

**It is rare, but getting pregnant can happen. If it does, there is a 30% chance it will be ectopic (outside of the uterus).**

**This birth control method is not for you if:**

- You cannot use general anesthesia (a drug that puts you under).
- You have certain health problems with your reproductive organs.

**Because this is a permanent method, it is the law that you will have to wait 30 days after signing the consent form before you can have it done.** The signed consent is good for 180 days to give you time to think about your choice. Even after you sign the form, you have the right to change your mind about getting it done.



**Male Sterilization:** Stops the sperm from leaving the testes. For males, a vasectomy is the method used.

### How does it work?

- A doctor will cut the cord in the scrotum that holds the sperm.

### How well will it work?

- This method works very well. It is more than 99% effective.

### What is the cost?

- Vasectomies are covered by most insurance plans and Medicaid. This method is **not** covered by Medicare.
- If not covered by insurance, it can cost \$350 to \$1000

### Pros:

- Lowers the worry of getting pregnant.
- Offers permanent birth control that works very well.
- It works better and costs less than most female sterilization methods.
- It can be done in the doctor's office.
- You don't need general anesthesia (a drug that puts you under).

### Cons:

- Does not protect you from HIV and STIs (infections you can get from sex).
- It is permanent and you may feel regret.  
**\*Vasectomies can be reversed. It is successful in 50-70% of men.**
- You may have some pain afterwards and need a day or two to get better.

This method has some risks, such as:

- Infection
- Bleeding

Sperm may still be present for up to 12 weeks. Be sure to use a back-up method until a semen test shows no sperm.

This birth control method is not for you if:

- You have a current infection in your penis, prostate, or scrotum (such as an STI).

**Talk to your CHN health educator, social worker, or provider if you have more questions!**

Handout adapted from RHAP