

Sterilization

If you don't plan to have children, or you don't plan to have any more, you may consider a permanent form of contraception (birth control), or sterilization. Sterilization is very effective at preventing pregnancies — the failure rate is under 1%. There are no hormonal side effects. Sterilization won't affect menstruation (your period), appearance or sexual health.

You may hear that certain types of sterilization are reversible, but there's no guarantee your fertility will come back if you change your mind in the future.

Types of sterilization

- **Tubal ligation** ("tube tying") is effective immediately after surgery. In the surgery, a woman's doctor closes her fallopian tubes, so eggs stay inside her ovaries. There's a short recovery time, and tubal ligation is effective immediately.
- **Transcervical sterilization** is a procedure where a doctor puts something into a woman's fallopian tubes. Scar tissue forms around this device, and blocks sperm from reaching the egg. After transcervical sterilization, couples must use backup methods of contraception until a doctor makes sure the fallopian tube is completely blocked at an appointment three months after the procedure.
- **A vasectomy** is a type of surgery that blocks sperm from leaving a man's body. It can be done under local anesthesia at a doctor's office and has a short recovery time. You can go home the same day. After a vasectomy, couples must use a backup method of birth control until the man's doctor says his sperm count is zero.

Questions to ask yourself

1. Am I done having children? Or am I sure I don't want any?
2. Can I plan for the recovery time I need after my surgery?
3. Should my partner or I have the procedure done?
4. Do I need a method that's effective immediately? Do I have a plan for backup?

Questions to ask your doctor

1. Are some types of sterilization easier to reverse than others?
2. Do you recommend using (or staying on) hormonal birth control for any of my health conditions?
3. What are the risks of surgery?

For members who don't speak English, or are deaf or hard of hearing, we offer free oral interpretation services for all languages as well as auxiliary aids to assist you. To get these services, call Amerigroup Washington Member Services at 1-800-600-4441 (TTY 711) Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific time.

To speak to a nurse or doctor 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, call the 24-hour Nurse HelpLine at 1-866-864-2544 (TTY 711) for English or 1-866-864-2545 (TTY 711) for Spanish.

For more helpful information on family planning:

- [Office on Women's Health](#)
- [Medline Plus](#)
- [National Institutes of Health](#)
- [Office of Adolescent Health](#)

Sources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Contraception

<https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/contraception/index.htm>, accessed August 14, 2018

World Health Organization
Family Planning

<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/fp-global-handbook/en/>, accessed August 14, 2018

National Institutes of Health
What are the different types of contraception?

<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/contraception/conditioninfo/types>, accessed August 14, 2018