

Information for Women

(Your Sterilization Operation)

Notice:

Your decision at any time not to be sterilized will not result in the withdrawal or withholding of any benefits provided by programs or projects receiving federal funds.

You will find the consent form at the back of this booklet.

Why This Information Is Important To You

Sterilization (tying your tubes) is an operation that is meant to make it impossible for you to become pregnant. This booklet tells about the different ways to do this operation and what you should know before you have your tubes tied. You should read all of this paper.

Both men and women can be sterilized. If you would like to know about sterilization for a man (vasectomy), ask your doctor or clinic for that information.

If Medicaid Is To Pay For Your Sterilization, Certain Rules Must Be Met:

- You must be at least 21 years old.
- You must wait at least 30 days to have the operation after you sign the consent (permission) form. The only exception to this is when you have a premature birth or emergency abdominal surgery at least 72 hours after you sign the form.
- Your consent to sterilization cannot be given while you are in labor or childbirth or under the influence of alcohol or other substances that affect your ability to think clearly.
- You may, if you choose, bring someone with you when you sign the consent form.
- Your consent is good for 180 days (6 months) from the date you sign the form.

Making Up Your Mind

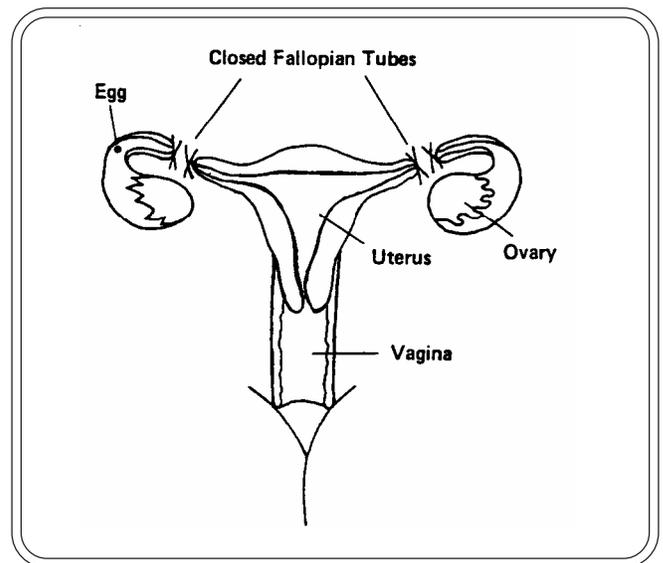
Being sterilized is completely up to you. No one can force you to be sterilized. If you decide not to be sterilized, it will not affect your benefits or medical treatment.

Make sure you do not want to have children ever again, for any reason, before you decide to be sterilized.

If you have decided not to become pregnant again, then having your tubes tied is a safe, effective operation. It requires a relatively brief stay in the hospital, and problems are rare.

What is “tying your tubes”?

In this operation the doctor blocks or separates each of your two tubes so that your eggs cannot travel through them from your ovaries to your uterus. Blocking the tubes makes pregnancy impossible. (See figure below.)



Your monthly bleeding (period) continues as before. This operation will not cause change of life.

What are the types of operations I can have?

There are four types of tubal ligation: Laparoscopy, Laparotomy, Mini-Laparotomy and Vaginal Method. (See chart on next page.)

Types of Tubal Ligation	How Operation Is Done	The Time It Takes	Hospital Stay	Recovery Time
Laparoscopy (LAP-AH-ROSS-KOH-PEE)	Stomach is inflated with a harmless gas. Doctor makes a 1/2" opening below the navel. Sometimes another tiny opening is made in lower stomach. 1 to 2 stitches are needed.	About 30 minutes	Less than 24 hours.	2 - 3 days. Usually can have sex within a few days.
Laparotomy (LAP-AH-ROT-OH-MEE)	Doctor makes a 3 - 5" opening in lower stomach and seals tubes by cutting, clamping, or cauterizing. The opening is stitched closed.	About 30 minutes	A few days.	2 weeks. Can have sex within a few days.
Mini-Laparotomy	Doctor makes a 1 - 2" opening in lower stomach and seals tubes by cutting, clamping, or cauterizing. The opening is stitched closed.	About 30 minutes.	Less than 24 hours.	2 - 3 days. Usually can have sex within a few days.
Vaginal Method	Doctor makes a small opening in back of vagina. After the tubes are sealed, the opening is closed with special stitches that do not have to be removed.	About 30 minutes.	Less than 24 hours.	2 - 3 days. Cannot have sex until vagina heals - usually 3 - 4 weeks.

The operation you have depends on your health and your doctor. Talk to him or her about which operation you will have.

There are discomforts, risks and benefits involved with any operation and you should be aware of them before you have your tubes tied. Talk with your doctor or clinic.

Tying your tubes should be considered permanent and cannot be undone.

Is this operation guaranteed to work?

This operation works almost all the time, but sometimes 2 to 5 women out of every 1,000 will get pregnant. This is usually because the two ends of the tubes have grown back together.

Having your tubes tied is more than 99% effective. (This is higher than all other ways of preventing pregnancy.)

What if I do want more children?

If you are not ready to have your tubes tied, then there are other ways of preventing pregnancy available to you. They are the pill, the IUD, the diaphragm, contraceptive foam, the Norplant implant, Depo-Provera shots, condoms (rubbers) and the Natural Method. These ways are 85 to 98% effective in preventing pregnancy if used the right way every time you have sex.

Talk to your doctor or clinic if you want information or counseling on any of these choices.

When can I have my tubes tied?

You can have your tubes tied at any time in your life. For Medicaid to pay for the operation, you must be at least 21 years of age.

You can have your tubes tied even if you are married or if you do not have children.

You can have the operation after having a baby, even if you have a baby by Cesarean Section. In either of these two cases, you must make up your mind at least 30 days before the baby is due.

I have decided to have my tubes tied, now what?

Your consent must be given at least 30 days before you have your tubes tied. Your consent lasts for 180 days (6 months) after you sign the form.

What if I have more questions?

All of your questions should be answered by your doctor or clinic before you decide to have your tubes tied.

Remember

If you decide you don't want to have your tubes tied after all, you can change your mind at any time.

Summary

If you are sure you do not want to bear children and you want to become permanently sterile, then having your tubes tied is a safe, effective operation.

Be Sure To Take This Paper and Your Signed Consent Form With You.