

## **AFTER VASECTOMIES – WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS IF I WANT ANOTHER BABY?**

Between 2-5% of individuals who have had a vasectomy choose to be fertile again. The most common indication is starting a new relationship, often with a partner who has not had children.

### **There are two treatments available:**

- Surgical sperm retrieval from the testes (known as MESA, TESA or PESA) and using the sperm in an In vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatment cycle or
- Surgical rejoining of the vas deferens.

### **Points to be considered:**

- Whether the couple want 1 child or more.
- Withdrawal of Medicare funding for reversal of sterilisation. Withdrawal of funding in 1997 has prevented public hospital access for these operations and the necessity to have operations in private hospital. Patients in medical funds may receive payment for hospitalisation and theatre fees; however, medical fees (surgery and anaesthetist) have to be paid as 'out of pocket expenses'.
- How the sterilisation procedure was initially performed. This will affect the likelihood of successful surgical reversal.

### **Male Sterilisation**

The success of a reversal of sterilisation in the male will depend upon the following.

1. Following vasectomy some men develop sperm antibodies. If present in high levels some type of antibodies may cause 'clumping' or sticking together of sperm following ejaculation and thus interfere with sperm motility. It is Fertility Solutions recommendation that a sperm injection technique is employed after vasectomy reversal to achieve fertilisation irrespective of the presence of sperm antibodies.
2. Sperm quality post vasectomy. The longer the time interval following vasectomy the greater likelihood that sperm numbers and quality may be affected.

### **IVF Option**

In vitro fertilisation can be performed either in situations where surgery is unlikely to succeed, or as a first option. Males, who have had a vasectomy, undergo sperm

collection under local or general anaesthesia from either the epididymis (adjacent to the testicle) or the testicle itself. Microinjection of a single sperm into oocytes (ICSI) achieves a high fertilisation rate (60-70%) and implantation rate of up to 30% on transfer of embryos to the uterus. Sperm collection can be achieved in virtually all men who had been fertile before vasectomy no matter how long after vasectomy.

### **Reversal Procedure Option**

- Male reversal of vasectomy is performed with similar incision to the original vasectomy procedure. Microsurgery takes approx. 2 hours and the men are discharged home the same day of surgery. It is recommended that a week's recovery time is allowed before returning to heavy work.

### **Expected Results**

Men who had vasectomy less than 10 years ago and who had nil or low level sperm antibodies have the highest success rate. The longest reported interval between vasectomy and successful reversal has been 17 years.

It is recommended that you talk with a doctor who performs sterilisation reversal operations so that you can discuss success rates and get a costing for this procedure. As Affordable IVF does not currently offer surgical sperm retrieval and IVF treatment you would be referred to our parent company Fertility Solutions Sunshine Coast. For more information contact [Fertility Solutions Sunshine Coast](#).