

Some questions that are often asked about vasectomies

How is a vasectomy done?

It is done by cutting the vas deferens tubes between the testicles and the groin, and sealing them either with stitches or heat sealing (cauterization). The procedure is usually done under local anaesthesia.

How long has the procedure been around?

Vasectomies first started to be performed regularly for family planning in the U.S. in the 1940s. In the majority of the West it came into common use in the late 1960s.

How popular is vasectomy?

The result varies from country to country. New Zealand seems to have the highest rate of vasectomized men (23%), The U.S. and Europe are approximately 11%, and the lowest are China and India at 7–8%. In the U.S., 12% of married men between 20 and 39 have had a vasectomy, and of these 12%, nearly a quarter are ages 35 to 39.

Does it hurt?

Most men have some discomfort when the local anesthetic is being administered (about the same as an injection at the dentist) and for several days after vasectomy, so you shouldn't plan any strenuous work or activity for that period. Your doctor can help decide about postoperative activity.

What's are the differences between male and female sterilization?

Vasectomy is done under a local anesthetic, and a tubal ligation is done under a general. Vasectomy is less intrusive, statistically more reliable, and has fewer long-term complications. An informative paper is available from <www.vasectomy-information.com>.

Is vasectomy effective immediately?

No. Your doctor will tell you when you can depend on your vasectomy. It can be up to three months before all sperm are gone. In any case, you should be tested before trusting the surgery!

Some resources on vasectomies and population issues

Books

Becker, Stan, et al., eds. 2000. Population is People, a Friends Perspective, Burlington Vt.: Quaker Earthcare Witness

Denniston, George C. Vasectomy. 2002. Victoria, B.C.: Trafford Publishing

Pamphlets from QEW

Adoption, An Earth-Friendly Alternative
Friends's Witness on Rapid Population Growth
Immigration in a Crowded World
Toward Taking Away the Occasion of Abortion

A Witness on Sexuality for Friends

Websites

<www.populationconnection.org>

<www.vasectomy-information.com>

<www.plannedparenthood.org/birth-control-pregnancy/birth-control/vasectomy.htm>

<www.Vasectomy.Com>

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Men for Men

A Small Solution

for Some BIG Problems

Are you concerned about

b World peace?

b Global warming?

b Loss of air, soil, and water quality?

b Depletion of resources?

Each of these problems is worsened by increasing human population.

—Yet one half of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned!

Quaker Earthcare Witness

Men for Men—a fund for Quaker men to help pay for vasectomies

MANY OF US want to limit our family size, for many reasons. Some are concerned that, due to population pressures, the world we are leaving to our children and grandchildren will not be as healthy and as beautiful as the one we inherited.

Unfortunately, half of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned. That's why there are family-planning services—many of them oriented to women—to help our intentions become reality.

Now there is a fund specifically for Quaker men—the Men for Men (M-4-M) fund, administered by Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW)—to help pay for vasectomies. This pamphlet gives information about how to apply for this financial aid.

A VASECTOMY is a relatively simple and safe outpatient procedure that permanently renders a male infertile, without affecting sexual desire or performance. For a family that already has the desired number of children, it is the ideal family planning method. It has been a positive factor for millions in reducing anxieties about unwanted procreation, as well as tensions between partners over unequal responsibilities for birth control. The result has been greater well-being for individuals, families, and the planet.

Although vasectomies are inexpensive relative to female sterilization, the up-front cost can still be a barrier to low- to moderate-income families, including those who don't have insurance to cover this need.

The M-4-M fund is designed to encourage men to take this important step sooner rather than later.

How M-4-M works

AFTER A MAN DECIDES that he wants to end his fertility permanently, he should read up about vasectomy. A good place to start is the website <www.vasectomy-information.com>.

The M-4-M fund is available to men who belong to or regularly attend a Friends meeting or church. We hope to expand it in the future to include all men. In any case, the fund applies only to

residents and doctors in the U.S.

There are two M-4-M forms. One has information and needs to be filled out to apply to QEW for funding. The other has information for the doctor who will perform an M-4-M-assisted vasectomy.

A Friend who is interested in having M-4-M help pay for his vasectomy should find a doctor and discuss the procedure. It is best to take a long a copy of the M-4-M Doctor Letter. Be sure to discuss financial arrangements with the doctor's staff.

M-4-M will pay up to \$450 directly to the doctor after the procedure is done. Hopefully the doctor will accept this as full payment. If not, the applicant must pay any extra cost.

M-4-M is a rotating fund. We request that men who have benefitted from M-4-M to repay the fund when they are able, so others can have the same opportunity.

Of course, the M-4-M fund gratefully accepts donations from other men—and women too!

For more information

For more information about the M-4-M fund (including the Doctor Letter and the Information and Application forms) is available on the Quaker Earthcare Witness website <www.quakerearthcare.org> or by contacting the QEW office (see back).

Quakers and Population

Why do Quakers focus so much on human population? Perhaps it is because of the second Great Commandment, to "Love your neighbor as your self." We need to take care of our neighbors' air, water, and land and not foul it with pollution.

Furthermore, Friends are known for their strong pacifism and efforts to take away the reasons for war. Unfortunately, as human population becomes more dense, the risk of armed conflict rises.

