



Post-vasectomy Treatment Options

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In this set of “slides”, I will review with you briefly what some of the important concepts are in situations where there has been a vasectomy. How do you maximize your chances of becoming pregnant? How do you decide what option is right for you? What are the costs of vasectomy reversal at Boston Medical Center where I practice? It is always important to come for a visit if you live in the New England area so that we can meet and I can get much more information about both of you and fully educate you about all of the facts that will help you reach your goal of becoming pregnant and having a happy, healthy baby.

Occasionally, if you are from a far-away state or out-of-country, I can have a formal telephone consultation with you to review your case.

This, however, should provide you some of the basic information, realizing there is so much more that is specific to each couple and that we review when we meet.

Post-vasectomy Treatment Options: What are They ?



◆ Reversal only

◆ Reversal / aspiration

- Aspirated frozen sperm used for ICSI* if reversal fails

◆ Aspiration of sperm only / ICSI*

*ICSI is an in-vitro fertilization procedure in which a single sperm is directly injected into a harvested egg

What are the benefits of doing a vasectomy reversal



- Opportunity for natural conception
- Opportunity for more children - later on
- Opportunity for pregnancy each month
- Avoids in-vitro fertilization and ICSI
 - In-vitro is expensive (not covered by insurance)
 - Shots, blood tests, ultrasounds, egg harvesting
 - No guarantee of pregnancy

It is all about opportunity: what gives you the best opportunity to achieve your goal of having a baby

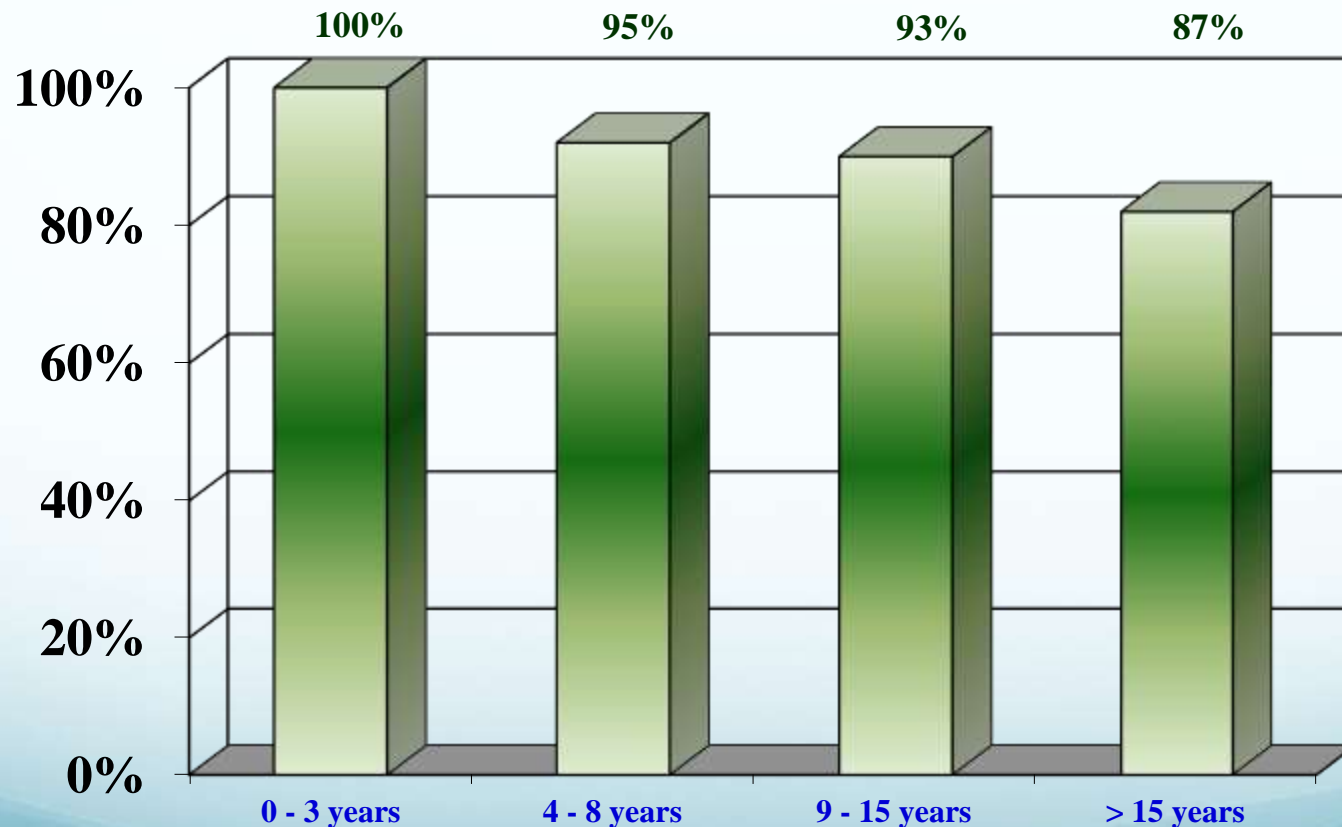
What is the chance of sperm in the semen after reversal



- Depends heavily on experience of the surgeon
 - I have been performing microsurgery for 24 years
 - Well over 1000 cases
- 93% of my patients overall will have sperm in the semen
 - Varies depending on the reason
 - vasectomy reversal
 - other, less common blockage situations
 - number of years since the vasectomy
 - first time or a redo if the man had failed surgery elsewhere
- Reconstruction maximizes opportunity for pregnancy !!
 - through intercourse every month
 - through intrauterine insemination, if needed

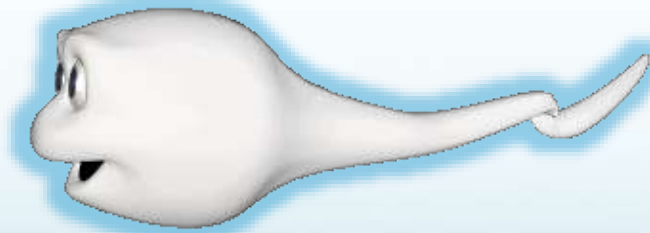
Chance of sperm in the semen after vasectomy reversal

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Number of years since the vasectomy

Therefore: How can a reversal of the vasectomy be a bad thing to do when the goal is for you to get pregnant ???



Each and every month you have a chance – the “old-fashioned way”

Reversal + Aspiration



- The aspirated sperm taken at the time of the reversal is frozen at a sperm bank
 - I usually use New England Cryogenics
- Only for those couples who would use the frozen sperm for in-vitro if the reversal fails
 - harvested sperm has to be used with in vitro fertilization, not anything simpler
 - saves an aspiration procedure at a later date, if necessary
- Will increase costs, though:
 - I do not charge anything additional: aspiration is easy for me to do at the time I am doing a reversal
 - But, freezing and storage is a cost at the sperm bank (\$875)
 - May not ever need since the reversal success rate is so high



Reversal + Aspiration

- For some older women -
 - a blended approach may be useful:
 - reversal to put sperm into the ejaculate
 - aspiration to use sperm in the next month or so
 - to be used before the semen is even checked
 - if no pregnancy with ICSI (the likelihood)
 - sex becomes “back-up plan” to get pregnant

For the older woman, it is even more important to include reversal, so that every month, until menopause, there is a chance of pregnancy with sex

How do you make the decision between *Reversal Only* or *Reversal + Aspiration*



- Ask yourself the questions:

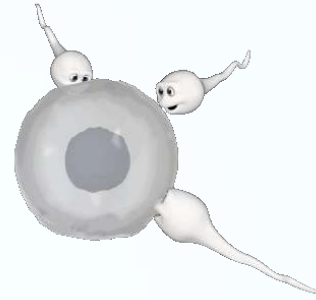
1. If the reversal fails, will we use in-vitro technologies?

- each attempt (not pregnancy) costs approximately \$10,000
- an in-vitro cycle is quite intense
- an in-vitro cycle may not be feasible
- you may have religious or ethical issues with in-vitro fertilization
 - Quite important to some couples
- in-vitro fertilization is not for everyone

2. Are we happy with the probability of reversal success?

- Dr. Oates' own information and results
- The number of years since my vasectomy

So why not just harvest sperm and use it for in-vitro fertilization and forget about the reversal ?



- There is no cost savings : reversal vs aspiration and in-vitro
 - in-vitro is expensive per attempt
 - most couples who do not get pregnant do it again – doubling the cost
 - they still may not be pregnant and then there is no chance
- For the woman: in-vitro is not simple by any means
 - multiple hormone shots, ultrasounds and blood tests
 - anesthesia for egg harvesting
 - embryo transfer procedures
- For the couple: the data shows:
 - no increase in pregnancy rate over a reversal
 - one cycle of in-vitro does not equal one pregnancy –
 - one cycle is just one chance at pregnancy
 - much higher out-of-pocket expense

“Aspiration and in-vitro” does not optimize chances of having a baby

What is the reversal surgery like?



- Day surgery in the Moakley Ambulatory Surgical Suite:
 - in and out the same day
 - I perform all of my microsurgery on Friday
 - nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before
- Anesthesia:
 - intravenous sedation given by the Anesthesiologist
 - makes you drift off to sleep throughout the whole procedure
 - local anesthesia that I give keeps you numb in the scrotum
 - you are comfortable and snoozing the whole time
- Post-operative recovery
 - most men go back to desk work in 3-4 days
 - no heavy lifting, vigorous exercising for 2-4 weeks
 - a long list of instructions is provided upon discharge



What are the Costs of Vasectomy Reversal at Boston Medical Center ??

- Vasectomy reversal is not a covered benefit by insurance
- Pre-pay figures at Boston Medical Center
 - Operating room charges : \$2560
 - Anesthesiology charges : \$900
 - Surgical fee : \$4000
 - **Total :** **\$7460**
- If aspiration is performed at the time of reconstruction:
 - New England Cryogenics (the sperm bank) charges : \$875
 - a whole packet of information and forms are provided for you
 - no additional surgical fee (as above)

What are the keys to a successful reversal surgery



- Experience of the surgeon !!!
 - This is what I do a lot as part of my practice in Male Reproductive Medicine and Surgery
- The best equipment
 - I have a fantastic Zeiss Operating microscope
 - I use only the ideal sutures
 - they are tiny, tiny, tiny
- The best team
 - Erica, my administrative assistant
 - Pam, my surgical scheduler
 - All of the wonderful nurses in the operating room
- An appreciation for what is at stake here
 - YOUR chances of having children
 - I cannot stress enough how important in life I think that is
 - I will accept nothing but the best from myself and those working with me in the OR



Summary



- ◆ Vasectomy reversal only
- ◆ Vasectomy reversal with simultaneous aspiration
- ◆ Aspiration of sperm only

- Which option is most beneficial to you
 - That which suits your needs
 - Financially, logistically, etc.
 - Most importantly – that which maximizes chances of pregnancy

Summary



- **My own opinion -**

- There is little reason not to include vasectomy reversal in the strategy employed by every couple
 - reversal maximizes your chances of having a child in the simplest way possible – sex
 - an exception is when the fallopian tubes are blocked
 - an exception is when the woman requires in-vitro for uncorrectable ovulatory dysfunction

Please call for an appointment if you would like to discuss your own personal situation further, I would love to be of help to you.

