POST-VASECTOMY SPERM COUNTS
Frequently-Asked Questions

How should the specimen be produced?
Produce the specimen at home after at least 3 days of abstinence from sexual activity. The semen should be produced by masturbation (i.e. by hand) into the plastic container provided. You must not use a condom to collect the semen and the entire sample must be collected.

The first specimen should be produced 16 weeks after your vasectomy operation and the second 2-4 weeks after the first (i.e. 18-20 weeks post-operatively).

Always use the specimen containers provided. Do not collect your sample in a glass container because the silica in glass tends to destroy sperms and may give a false-negative result.

What should I do once the specimen has been produced?
- Fill in the date and time of production and the days since your last ejaculation on the request form. This is essential for accurate assessment
- Check that the container is clearly marked with your name and date of birth.

PLEASE NOTE: If the details on either the form or container are not complete, the laboratory will not accept the sample and you may need to bring another one to the laboratory at a later stage.

How soon does the specimen need to be delivered?
The specimen must be brought to the hospital within 1 hour of production. During the journey, it should be kept warm (e.g. in an inside pocket) but avoid excessive heating or chilling which may invalidate the test.

Most laboratories are only open to receive specimens between 09.00hr and 16.00hr on weekdays and they are not normally open at weekends. Specimens received outside these hours cannot be processed and will be discarded; in this event, you will be requested to provide another sample at a later date.

How will I know about the results?
If these are your first samples, we require the results of both samples to determine whether you are sterile. You will be informed of the results by post but you will not hear anything
until two samples have been processed.

If there are still some sperms present after your vasectomy, and this is seen in 20% of patients after vasectomy, you will be advised to perform further counts until we have received two, consecutive, clear specimens from you or you are found to have consistently less than 10,000 non-motile sperms per ml of semen.

**When can I stop contraceptive precautions?**

Until you receive a letter confirming the “all clear” on your samples, you must continue with your contraceptive precautions.

If there are a few (less than 10,000 per ml) motile sperms present in your samples, it is unlikely that a pregnancy could result but you will be informed by letter of this.

**Are there any other important points?**

This publication provides input from specialists, the British Association of Urological Surgeons, the Department of Health and evidence-based sources as a supplement to any advice you may already have been given by your GP. Alternative treatments can be discussed in more detail with your urologist or Specialist Nurse.

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