Female Sterilization

衞生署
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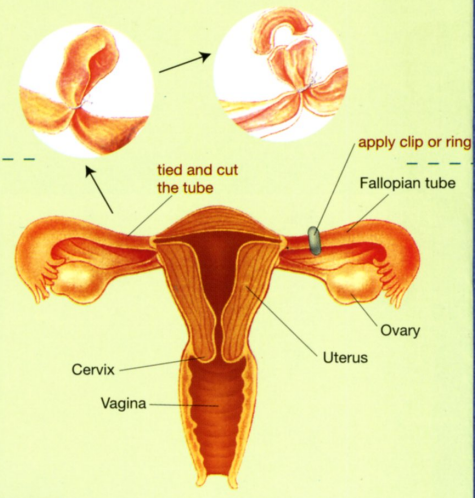
Female Sterilization

What is female sterilization?

Female sterilization is a permanent form of contraception. It involves a minor operation to cut or to block the Fallopian tubes on both sides of the uterus. Methods of female sterilization includes

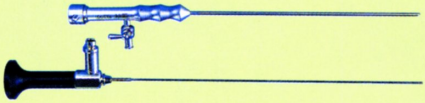
1. **Postpartum sterilization**
2. **Laparoscopic sterilization**
3. **Minilaparotomy and bilateral tubal ligation**
4. **Vaginal tubal sterilization.**



What is postpartum sterilization?

- Postpartum sterilization involves getting your tubes tied within the first few days after delivery.
- Because the uterus is still enlarged at that time, a small incision (usually 2-3 cm) can be made under the umbilicus and the tubes can be tied, cut and a portion to be removed .
- The entire procedure takes 10-20 minutes and can be carried out under general anaesthesia or local anaesthesia.
- If you have a Caesarean section, your tubes may also be tied and cut during the same operation.

What is laparoscopic sterilization?



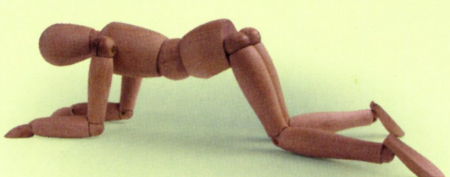
- Laparoscopic tubal ligation involves introduction of a laparoscope (a pencil-like instrument with a small camera to be attached at the end, see diagram above) through a small incision under the umbilicus.
- Another small incision (about 1 cm) at the lower abdomen is made to apply clips or rings to occlude the Fallopian tubes.
- The operation is usually done under general anaesthesia and you can be discharged from the hospital on the same day (Day Surgery) or on the next day.
- **This is the preferred operation because the wound is smaller and thus you will feel less painful and have faster recovery.**

What is minilaparotomy?

- Minilaparotomy involves making an incision approximately 3 to 5 cm long at the lower abdomen and removing a portion of both Fallopian tubes as described in postpartum sterilization.
- The operation can be done under general anaesthesia or local anaesthesia. Removal of stitches is usually required after 5 days.
- Hospital stay is variable but tends to be longer than laparoscopic operation.

What is vaginal tubal ligation?

- Vaginal tubal sterilization involves making a small incision in the vagina and removing a portion of both Fallopian tubes through it.
- There will be **no abdominal scar**.
- The operation is done under local anaesthesia.
- You can be discharged immediately after the operation.
- During the operative proceduce you need to adopt a kneeling position.
- To use this method, you should not be overweight.



Are there any other benefits of sterilization?

Apart from being a form of reliable permanent contraception, several potential benefits of tubal ligation have been suggested in the medical literature. These include a potential decrease in ovarian cancer as well as a decrease in pelvic inflammatory disease, i.e. an infection of the abdominal and pelvic cavity.

Will the operation fail?

- **For any types of tubal sterilization as mentioned above, in every 1000 women who have the operation, 2 to 3 of them may still get pregnant.**
- **Should pregnancy occur after tubal sterilization, the risk of having an ectopic pregnancy will be higher. This can be a life-threatening situation without prompt treatment.**

If at any point after tubal sterilization you think that you may be pregnant, i.e. when you have missed period, and/or have vaginal bleeding and/or feel pain over the tummy, a pregnancy test should be checked immediately. If your pregnancy test is positive, contact your obstetrician as soon as possible to exclude ectopic pregnancy.

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