What Is a Vasectomy?
Vasectomy is a form of male birth control that cuts the supply of sperm to your semen. It’s performed by making a small incision and sealing the tubes that carry sperm.

A low-risk procedure, a vasectomy can usually be performed in an outpatient setting under local anesthesia.

The choice to have a vasectomy is a very personal one. Discuss what is best for you and your family with your partner, and talk with your doctor.

For an appointment with a Summa urologist, call 330.374.1255. Learn more at summahealth.org/urology.
The Procedure
Summa Health urologists perform a no-scalpel vasectomy, in which the scrotum is punctured using a small clamp with pointed ends. Each tube is lifted out, cut, sealed and put back in place. Just as effective as the conventional method, a no-scalpel vasectomy typically results in less bleeding, swelling and pain, as well as a smaller incision. The skin may be closed with stitches that dissolve, so they do not have to be removed. The procedure takes about 20 minutes.

Recovery
To help decrease pain and swelling during the healing process:

- Put cold packs on the area.
- Lie on your back as much as possible for the remainder of the day.
- Treat mild discomfort with an over-the-counter pain reliever, such as ibuprofen.
- Wear compression shorts or a jockstrap for added support.

Mild discomfort or pain is normal for a few days after a vasectomy. While you may be able to return to work in one or two days, avoid heavy lifting for at least a week.

Sexual Activity
You can have sex again as soon as you are comfortable, usually within a week. However, a vasectomy is not immediately effective. Sperm may still be in the semen for many months after the surgery. In fact, it takes approximately 20 ejaculations and up to three months to clear the sperm from your tubes.

Three months after the surgery, your Summa urologist will test your sperm count to ensure your semen is clear. Until the sperm count is zero, or there are very few non-moving sperm, sex without another method of birth control may lead to pregnancy.

After recovering from an uncomplicated vasectomy, you and your partner should not notice any difference during sex. You should not experience any erection problems, and ejaculations and orgasms should feel the same. However, a vasectomy does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). To protect yourself, always use a condom.

Risks
While vasectomy is a common surgery with low risk of complications, contact your Summa urologist if you notice bleeding under the skin or an infection at the incision site.

Some complications can be treated with rest and pain medication, while others may require additional medical or surgical treatment. Your Summa urologist will present the best options depending on your situation.