



Sterilization and Reporting Frequently Asked Questions

COUNSELING

When should patients receive counseling?

Patients should receive counseling before they sign the sterilization consent form.

Who can provide counseling?

Any properly trained individual can provide counseling. The counselor does not need to be a doctor or nurse and **should not** be the operating surgeon. Counsel the patient in their preferred language.

What information should the counseling session include?

Counselors should discuss:

- Sterilization as a permanent contraceptive method, including the procedure, risks and who can be sterilized
- A patient's right to change their decision about sterilization at any time **before** the procedure, and that this decision will not affect their current medical services or benefits.
- Other non-permanent contraceptive methods, such as intrauterine devices (IUDs), the implant (i.e., Nexaplon), pills, injection, patch, ring, male and female condoms and abstinence

Counselors should also include time for the patient to ask questions.

CONSENT

What are the requirements for a patient to consent?

To give consent, a patient must be:

- 21 or older
- Legally able to give consent
- Able to reaffirm their consent with a signature when they present for sterilization (a witness must be present at this time)

A patient cannot give consent:

- During hospitalization for childbirth
- While seeking an induced abortion

Who can sign as the witness on the sterilization consent form?

Anyone **except for the counselor or operating surgeon** can sign as a witness. We recommend an employee of the medical facility or doctor's office be the witness, not a friend or family member of the patient. Your facility or practice may have additional policies on who can serve as a witness on consent forms as well.

Can a patient go to any health care facility for a sterilization procedure?

Yes. A qualified provider at any facility can perform the sterilization procedure as long as they have a copy of the original sterilization consent form. A staff member can request a copy of the form from the facility where it was signed if the patient does not have it.

Are there any exceptions to the 30-day mandatory waiting period from when the patient signs the sterilization consent form to when the sterilization can be performed?

Yes. The procedure may be performed if the patient signed the consent form at least 72 hours prior to the following events:

- Early delivery, but only if the patient signed the sterilization consent form at least 30 days before the estimated due date
- Emergency abdominal surgery

Do sterilization consent forms expire?

Yes. Sterilization consent forms expire after 180 days. Patients will need to complete a new sterilization consent form after 180 days and a new 30-day waiting period will begin.

Where can I obtain a sterilization consent form?

Visit health.ny.gov and search “sterilization consent form” to download consent forms in English and Spanish.

REPORTING

What sterilization procedures do I need to report to the New York City Health Department?

The NYC Administrative Code (Title 17, Chapter 4: Standards Governing the Performance of Sterilizations, passed 1977) requires that all sterilization procedures performed in New York City be reported to the New York City Health Department. This includes male and female sterilizations, regardless of payer.

Procedures which are not performed for the specific purpose of rendering an individual sterile (e.g., gender reassignment surgery or hysterectomy) do not need to be reported, nor are they subject to sterilization administrative code regulations and requirements.

How do I report sterilizations to the New York City Health Department?

Report sterilizations through the Reporting Central website. Visit nyc.gov/nycmed to register for an account. After registering, return to the same website and select “Disease Reporting Central,” which is listed under the “Provider Services” header. For questions on how to set up an account or report a sterilization, please call the help desk at 1-888-692-6339 or email nycmed@health.nyc.gov.

When should I report sterilization procedures?

Report sterilization procedures monthly.

Who should report sterilization procedures?

Hospitals, clinics and any facility where sterilizations are performed are required to report sterilization procedures. Anyone who is trained to use the Reporting Central website can report. Facilities should have a system in place to ensure all sterilization procedures are reported in a timely manner.