

LATEST UPDATE IN FEMALE CONTRACEPTIVE HEALTH

Permanent contraceptive options for women have continued to evolve over the past quarter century. The demand has been for a highly effective method that is minimally invasive. Laparoscopic tubal sterilization has long been held as the gold standard for permanent sterilization. This method is now being challenged by a relatively new procedure called Essure.

Essure is a permanent birth control option that works with your body to create a natural barrier against pregnancy. This gentle procedure can be performed in a doctor's office in less than an hour.

Trusted by women and doctors for over five years, Essure is covered by most insurance companies. If the Essure procedure is performed in a doctor's office, depending on your specific plan, payment may be as low as a single co-pay.

When evaluating any type of medical treatment option, you as a consumer should ask yourself what are the advantages offered by the procedure. Essure involves no cutting or general anesthesia. Recovery is quick and hormone free.

The next process in evaluating a treatment option is gaining an understanding as to how it works. An Essure-certified doctor inserts soft, flexible micro-inserts into the fallopian tubes. No incision is needed because tiny inserts are delivered through the vagina and cervix.

Over the next several weeks, a natural barrier forms around the micro-inserts and prevents sperm from reaching the eggs. The ovaries will continue to release eggs, but they will be absorbed back into the body. After three months, it's time to get an Essure Confirmation Test to verify you're protected from the worries of unplanned pregnancy. The test uses a dye and special type of x-ray to ensure the fallopian tubes are blocked. Until that time, you must continue using another form of birth control.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I trust the Essure procedure?

Yes, Essure is 99.8% effective. In four years of clinical trial, there have been no pregnancies among Essure users.

Is the procedure painful?

Generally, no. Some women report mild discomfort or cramping, similar to a normal monthly cycle, during or after the procedure. A small number of women experience nausea in the hours following the procedure.

How long is the recovery?

Women are typically able to go home within 45 minutes of having the procedure and almost all return to normal activities within one to two days.

Is Essure reversible?

No, the Essure procedure is not reversible. Like a vasectomy or tubal ligation, Essure results in permanent sterilization, so you should be sure you do not want to have children in the future.

Will I still have a period?

Yes, you will still have a period, though some Essure users find that their period changes afterward, becoming slightly lighter or heavier. These changes are often temporary.

Is Essure covered by my insurance?

The Essure procedure is covered by most insurance providers. It is best to review your insurance coverage with your physician and insurance carrier before receiving the procedure.

To summarize, Essure is a permanent sterilization procedure and is not reversible. No form of birth control should be considered 100% effective, including the Essure procedure. Not all women who undergo the Essure procedure will achieve successful placement of both micro-inserts. Another form of birth control must be used for three months after the procedure. Risks may include cramping/pain, nausea/ vomiting, dizziness/light-headedness, bleeding/spotting. As with all procedures, there are risks associated with the Essure procedure. You should be well informed about these risks; discuss them in detail with your doctor before making your decision.

You should not use Essure if you may want to have children in the future. If you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant. Have had a prior tubal sterilization. Cannot have the Essure micro-inserts placed in both of your tubes (even if one tube is thought to be closed or you only have one tube). Are unwilling to use alternative birth control during the three-month waiting time. Are unwilling to have the follow-up Essure Confirmation Test. Have a known allergy to contrast dye. Have sensitivity to nickel, as shown by skin testing.

Essure is now available at Central Missouri Women's Healthcare in Marshall Missouri. Should you have an interest in the Essure procedure or have questions, Dr. Craig McCoy would be glad to discuss this with you. Give him a call at 660- 886-2842.