

Pass the remote - for the kids' channel

by Billy Adams Herald correspondent, in Sydney

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It could be the switch to stop the snip.

Remote control technology that changes TV channels and opens car doors could soon help men manage the flow of their sperm and prevent unwanted pregnancies.

Contraception by the press of a button may sound a radical concept, but the developers believe it has the potential to make vasectomies obsolete.

Researchers at the University of **Adelaide** have designed an implant the size of a grain of rice that would be inserted into the sperm-carrying tubes known as the vas deferens.

When a couple decide they want to have a child, the man would simply point the remote handset at his testicles, press a button and the valve-like device would open, allowing sperm to flow through.

“It will be like turning a TV on and off with a remote control, except that the remote will probably be locked away in your local doctor's office to safeguard against accidental pregnancy or potential misuse of the device,” project founder **Derek Abbott** told New Scientist magazine.

Emphasising development was still in its early stages, the team hope to do tests on sheep and pigs.

Around a third of Australian men aged between 40 and 59 are thought to have had a vasectomy, which involves cutting and sealing the sperm-carrying tubes. Attempts at reversing the procedure are often unsuccessful.

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