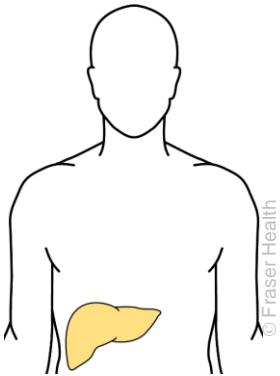


Bland Embolization: Treating Liver Tumours

What is a bland embolization?

Bland embolization (say *em-bow-lie-zay-shun*) is a way to treat tumours in the liver.

Tumours need blood to grow. Bland embolization uses x-ray dye and small particles to block the supply of blood to the tumour. This helps stop the tumour from growing.



Some people need bland embolization with other treatments, such as surgery or ablation.

How long will it take?

It usually takes 1 to 2 hours.

Plan to stay in the hospital overnight.

Bring only the items you need for the night, including your medicines.

You must arrange for a responsible adult to drive or escort you home.

Can I bring a relative or friend?

Yes, a relative or friend can stay with you before and after the procedure. However, for safety reasons, they cannot be in the room during the procedure. We let them know where they can wait.

Who does the procedure?

An interventional radiologist does the procedure. This doctor specializes in image-guided procedures and uses real-time x-ray called fluoroscopy to do this procedure.

If you have any questions about the procedure, you can ask the radiologist before your procedure.

Will it hurt?

You might have some pain or discomfort during the procedure. We give medicine for numbing and pain to help you.

What happens before the procedure?

Either someone from our Medical Imaging Department or your doctor's office contacts you with specific instructions for how to prepare.

ALERT Tell us about the following:

- any allergies
- any reactions to x-ray dye

What happens during the procedure?

We start an intravenous in one of your arms. This allows us to give you medicines to help you relax (sedation) and to treat other discomforts, such as feeling sick to your stomach (nausea).

The radiologist does the following:

- Cleans the area with antiseptic.
- Injects numbing medicine to freeze the skin (similar to dental freezing) in your wrist or groin.
- Makes a small cut (incision) in the skin (the insertion site).
- Inserts a thin, long, flexible tube called a catheter through the cut, into a blood vessel, toward the tumour in the liver.
- Injects x-ray dye through the catheter to see the supply of blood to the liver.
- Injects small particles through the catheter to block the supply of blood to the tumour.
- Removes the catheter.
- Puts pressure on the insertion site (with a pressure band for the wrist, or a closure device for the groin). This helps to stop any bleeding.

What should I expect after the procedure?

We move you to our recovery area. Here, we watch you closely and look for bleeding at your insertion site. When ready, we move you to an inpatient unit to stay overnight.

Expect to wait 2 to 6 hours before you can walk. It depends on your insertion site and the medicines you received.

How do I care for myself at home?

Twenty-four (24) hours after the procedure:

- Take off the bandage or disc, if you have one on your wrist. Do not peel off any brown crust from your skin. Wash gently around this area.
- Shower (after you remove bandage).

To take care of yourself:

- Resume taking any regular medicines unless your doctor tells you otherwise.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Return to your regular diet.
- Do not smoke for at least 24 hours after getting home.
- Do not lift, push, or pull anything over 4 to 5 kilograms (10 pounds) for at least 48 hours after the procedure. This includes carrying children and groceries.
- Do not bathe or soak in a tub for 3 days after getting home.
- Do not do any heavy activities or exercises for at least 7 days after the procedure.

It is normal to have the following as you recover:

- nausea and low appetite
- pain for up to 7 days in the upper right stomach area, sometimes up into the shoulder or back
- fever up to 38.5°C (101°F) for 1 to 2 weeks
- tired feeling (fatigue) for 2 to 4 weeks

Try eating smaller meals more often and taking medicine for nausea.

Are there any risks or complications?

There is a risk of infection any time the skin is pierced or cut.

Unexpected complications can include:

- bleeding or blood clots at the insertion site
- reactions to medicines or x-ray dye
- life-threatening complications are possible, but rarely occur

Follow-up instructions

Some people have a CT scan 2 weeks to 1 month after the procedure. If needed, we call you with the date and time.

When to get help?

Call your doctor or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you notice any of the following:

- bleeding from the insertion site that does not stop after pressing on it firmly for at least 10 minutes
- pain that does not ease with medicine
- nausea or throwing up (vomiting) that does not get better
- signs of infection, such as a fever above 38.5°C (101°F), chills, body aches
- redness, pain, or yellow or green bad-smelling fluid (pus) coming from your insertion site
- numbness, coolness, or change in colour of the leg or foot, or arm or hand, depending on your insertion site



A 4 litre milk jug
weighs 4 kg
(9 pounds)

Locations

Lions Gate Hospital	604-984-5775
Royal Columbian Hospital	604-520-4640
Surrey Memorial Hospital	604-588-3308
Vancouver General Hospital	604-875-4111 Ext 68612

HealthLinkBC

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Call any time you have any questions or concerns. HealthLinkBC is open 24 hours. Available in 130 languages. For an interpreter, say your language in English. Wait until an interpreter comes on the phone.