

Information About Your Child's Procedure

Radiofrequency Ablation

Read this form so you understand the procedure and its risks. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand.

What is radiofrequency ablation (RFA)?

Radiofrequency ablation is a procedure in which heat is used to treat certain kinds of lesions. We use RFA most commonly for benign bone growths such as an osteoid osteoma.

How is radiofrequency ablation done?

Using a CT scan for guidance, a radiologist places a special hollow needle into the area of bone that requires treatment. Sometimes the doctor first biopsies the bone: a small piece is removed and sent to a laboratory for analysis.

Next, the doctor threads a tiny heating probe through the middle of the special needle.

The probe is insulated, except for at its tip. A machine attached to the probe transmits heat to the tip, and the heated tip is used to destroy the tumor or lesion. The tumor or lesion is not removed; over time it will be replaced with scar tissue.

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INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY

Will my child be awake for the procedure?

No. Your child will be given either intravenous sedation or general anesthesia.

How long will the procedure take?

One to two hours.

Will my child have pain after the procedure?

Most children immediately feel less pain after the procedure. If the needle-insertion site hurts, you may give your child over-the-counter pain medication.

What are the risks of RFA?

The procedure is considered low-risk. However, potential complications include:

- blood vessel or nerve damage
- bone fracture (rare)
- skin burn at the needle-insertion site
- infection
- incomplete treatment; recurrence of lesion

When will my child be able to go home after the procedure?

Your child will be able to go home on the same day. We will bring your child to the recovery area after the procedure. Once your child is awake and able to keep liquids down, you will be able to take him or her home.

When can I remove the bandage?

Leave the bandage on for 24 hours. Then you may remove the clear bandage and gauze; do not remove the Steri-Strips® (white strips). If they haven't fallen off after seven days, you may remove them.

When can my child bathe?

Keep the site completely dry for the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, your child may have a sponge bath or shower, but continue to keep the area dry.

(Keep water from the shower from falling directly on the entrance site.) Do not submerge the site in water (bath or pool) until the Steri-Strips have fallen off.

Are there any activity restrictions?

Your child can resume most activities the day after the procedure. Sometimes weight-bearing activities such as heavy lifting must be restricted. Please ask the doctor or other member of the Interventional Radiology team about returning to sports or strenuous activity, as this may depend on the area that was treated.

CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR CHILD EXPERIENCES ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- fever higher than 101° Fahrenheit
- pain uncontrolled by over-the-counter pain medication
- swelling or redness at the needle-insertion site
- bleeding or discharge (such as pus) from the needle-insertion site

Call Interventional Radiology between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 215-590-7000. At the first prompt push 1 and at the second prompt push 2.

At all other times, call 215-590-1000 and ask to speak to the interventional radiologist on call.

The Interventional Radiology team is here to help you and your child. Please ask us if you have any questions or if anything is not clear.

Thank you!