

Cryoablation in Interventional Radiology



What is cryoablation?

Cryoablation is a procedure that uses very cold temperatures to freeze and destroy abnormal tissue. Talk with your child's doctor to learn why your child needs it.

What happens when we get to Interventional Radiology (IR) for the procedure?

- You and your child will go to the short stay unit or pre-procedure unit.
- Your child will change into a gown.
- A nurse will ask questions and check your child's heart rate, breathing, blood pressure and temperature (vital signs).
- The IR doctor will tell you about risks and get consent (permission) for the procedure. They will also mark the procedure site with a marker.
- You will also meet the doctor who will put your child to sleep (anesthesiologist).
- Ask questions at any time.

What happens when the procedure starts?

- A team member will:
 - Take your child to the procedure room.
 - Connect them to a monitor so the team can watch their vital signs.
 - Give your child medicine to help them relax.
 - Place an I.V. before or after your child is put to sleep.
- The anesthesiologist will talk with your child about each step of going to sleep.
- A breathing tube will be placed after your child is asleep. It will be removed before your child wakes up.

What happens during the procedure?

- The team will clean the procedure space with a special soap and cover it with sterile towels. This helps prevent infection.
- The doctor will:
 - Use radiology (CT or ultrasound) images to find the area to treat.
 - Give a numbing shot at the area to treat.
 - Put a cryoprobe through your child's skin right into the area needing treatment. A cryoprobe is a long, needle-like device. It is smaller than a straw. The doctor will watch the probe the entire time as they place it in your child's body and major blood vessels and avoid other structures.
 - Freeze the area with the cryoprobe. The freeze time depends on the size of the area that needs to be treated.
- The team will watch your child closely for any issues.
- The doctor may use a nerve block to help with pain. They will talk with you about this and get consent before the procedure.
- The team may use neurophysiologic monitoring to help prevent nerve damage from the freezing.
- The doctor will check the probe placement and the freezing often by using either CT or ultrasound.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

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What happens after the procedure?

- Your child will:
 - Go to the post-anesthesia care unit (PACU) to wake up after the breathing tube is removed. Your child will be in the PACU about 30 minutes to 1 hour.
 - Go back to the pre-procedure room after they wake up.
- Tell the nurse if your child is having pain.
- Your child may be sleepy but should be able to go home in 2 to 3 hours.
- In certain cases, your child may need to be admitted to the hospital. The doctor will review this process with you before the procedure.

What should I expect at home?

- There will be a small dressing where the cryoprobe went into the skin (incision site). The dressing should stay on for 1 to 2 days.
- Your child may shower the day after the procedure.
- The doctor:
 - Will give you instructions for activity limits. Your child's activity after the procedure depends on the location and size of the area treated.
 - May give you a prescription for pain medicine.
- Your child will have a follow-up visit in the Interventional Radiology clinic 1 month after the procedure.

When should I call the doctor?

Call the doctor if your child has:

- Pain not helped with medicine.
- Temperature higher than 100.5°F.
- Very bad blistering of the skin at the incision site.
- Very bad blanching of the skin at the incision site. Blanching of the skin means the skin turns pale or white.
- Numbness that gets worse.
- Trouble breathing.
- Nausea or vomiting (throwing up).
- Drainage or bad smell coming from the incision site.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department (ED) **right away**. If you feel it is safe to travel, come to a Children's Healthcare of Atlanta ED where the doctors can see your child's cryoablation records.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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