

# Cryoablation in Interventional Radiology

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## 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.**

# Cryoablation in Interventional Radiology, continued

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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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