
What will happen after the embolization?

You will go to the Recovery Room where you will be checked. After 2 hours, you will be brought back to your room. You must remain flat in bed with no leg bending for 5 hours, or as ordered by the doctor.

Will I feel pain?

You may feel pressure or some pain in the upper abdomen or in the area of your liver when the medicine is injected. You may feel heat all over your body.

You will be given a pain medicine pump. By pressing a button, you will be able to give yourself the medicine you need to control pain.

After the treatment, you may notice some tenderness in the upper abdomen for a few days. This is normal and is caused by swelling in the liver. Pain medicine will control this tenderness.

Will I feel sick?

During the injection you may feel like you want to vomit. You may feel this way for a few days after the treatment is done. Most people will not vomit.

You may have an increase in symptoms, especially flushing. Your Sandostatin® dose may be increased for a few days.

Most people are back to their usual dose before they go home. Other side effects you may notice include pain in the abdomen, constipation, fever, sweats, chills, fatigue, lack of appetite and hiccups. Many people do not complain of side effects.

All side effects can be managed by adjusting your medicine.

When can I go home?

The usual hospital stay is 6 days. Daily blood tests will show how your liver is working. When the liver is working as it should and you do not have a fever, you can go home.

What needs to be done after I leave hospital?

When you leave, you may still feel some side effects. Medicine will be prescribed for you to take at home. To see how the liver reacted to the treatment, you will have:

- Eight weekly blood tests done at a lab near your home. A requisition will be given to you.
- A CT scan done at the London Health Sciences Centre about 8-10 weeks after the treatment.

You may also need a 24-hour urine collection before your next appointment or about 2 weeks after the CT scan.

A follow-up appointment will be made at the London Regional Cancer Program.

Comments, Feedback?

Contact Patient & Professional Education
519-685-8742

Email: lrcpeducation@lhsc.on.ca



Neuroendocrine
Cancer

Hepatic Arterial Chemoembolization For Patients with Carcinoid Tumour (functional)



London Health Sciences Centre
London Regional Cancer Program

790 Commissioners Road East
London, Ontario N6A 4L6
519-685-8600

www.lhsc.on.ca/About_Us/LRCP/

What are carcinoid tumours?

Carcinoid tumours are also called neuro-endocrine cancer. This cancer is very rare and usually slow growing. It can start in the bowel, lung, pancreas, appendix or the stomach. Carcinoid tumours can also make your body create extra hormones or chemicals. When it does, these tumours are called “functional” and they can cause symptoms that will make you feel sick.

Most people will not feel symptoms until the cancer spreads to the liver. Symptoms include skin flushing, watery diarrhea, rapid beating of the heart, changes in blood pressure, asthma-like wheezing, shortness of breath and changes to the heart valves. A ‘carcinoid crisis’ is when you feel very strong symptoms. You may not get all of these symptoms if you have carcinoid tumours.

How is this cancer treated?

Chemoembolization is one way to treat carcinoid tumours. The goal of this treatment is to slow down or stop the growth of tumours in the liver.

Can an embolization cure the cancer?

An embolization does not cure the cancer. It can be very effective in reducing the tumour’s size or stopping its growth. When either one of these happens, the symptoms from the cancer are then made less or stopped.

Many people with carcinoid tumours are able to return to work and do the activities they enjoy.

What medicine is used in the embolization?

A mixture of chemotherapy is injected into the artery that goes to the tumour(s). This mixture then kills the cancer cells.

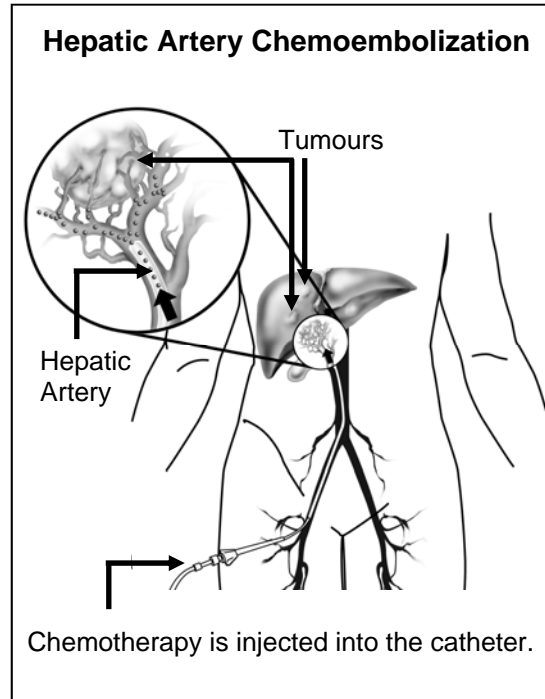
If you have a functional tumour, you may need to take an extra 60 mg of Sandostatin® (octreotide) about 14 days before having the embolization. This dose will be on top of your normal dose of Sandostatin®. This extra dose lowers the risk of having carcinoid crisis during or right after treatment.

How is an embolization done?

The following is a general description of the treatment. A nurse will give you more details when you are admitted to hospital.

- A Radiologist will take a special x-ray to find the arteries in the liver.
 - A catheter (flexible tube) is inserted into the large artery in the groin, usually the right side.
 - The catheter is moved into the hepatic artery and the arteries going to the tumour(s).
 - When the catheter is in the right place, the Radiologist injects the chemotherapy mixture.
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- After the injection, the catheter is removed and pressure is applied to the puncture site in the groin to prevent bleeding.



What will happen the day before the embolization?

You will be admitted to hospital and blood tests will be done. A nurse will complete a history and review the medicines, vitamins and herbs you are taking. **You must tell the nurse if you use Sandostatin® daily or monthly.** Bring all your medicines, vitamins and minerals in their original packaging with you to the hospital.

In the evening, an intravenous (IV) will be started and you will be given IV fluid overnight. You may not eat solid food after midnight, but you may drink fluids. Your groins will be shaved by your nurse. If you prefer, you may do this on your own.

What will happen the morning of the embolization?

You will be given a small dose of octreotide. This medicine prevents or lessens symptoms that may happen during the treatment.

A catheter will be inserted into your bladder, because you will not be able to move or go to the bathroom during and for 5 to 6 hours after the treatment.

A second IV will be started for the pain medicine and antibiotic. The antibiotic is to prevent infection and it will be given for 4 days after the treatment is finished.

What do I need to do during the embolization?

You must lie very still. Wires will be taped to your chest and a blood pressure cuff will be put on your arm. This is to measure your heart activity and blood pressure during the procedure.
