

# Embolisation using Onyx

## Introduction

This leaflet tells you about the procedure known as Embolisation using Onyx, it explains what is involved and what the possible risks are. It is not meant to be a substitute for informed discussion between you and your doctor, but can act as a starting point for such a discussion.

If you are having the procedure performed as a pre-planned operation then you should have plenty of time to discuss the situation with the Consultant Radiologist and the Consultant who referred you for the procedure. If you need the procedure as an emergency then there may be less time for discussion, but nonetheless, you should have had sufficient explanation before you sign the consent form.

## What is Embolisation using Onyx?

Embolisation is the process of blocking the blood supply to part of the body. A catheter is steered from the groin to the appropriate artery and a special liquid called 'Onyx' is injected to block the blood vessel. The procedure uses x-rays to see the \*catheter and steer it through the body. Embolisation can be performed using different materials to block the blood vessel. Onyx has unique characteristics making it useful in certain specific situations.

\* a catheter is a flexible tube inserted through a narrow opening into the body

## Why do I need an Embolisation procedure?

The specific reasons for each procedure vary between patients, this can be discussed with your referring doctor.

## What are the options or alternatives?

If there are any options or alternatives then this should be discussed at the point of referral.

## Who has made the decision?

The doctors in charge of your case, and the Radiologist performing the Embolisation, will have discussed the situation and feel that this is the best option. However, you will also have the opportunity for your opinion to be taken into account and if, after discussion with your doctors, you do not want the procedure carried out, you can decide against it.

## Who will be performing the Embolisation?

A specially trained doctor called an Interventional Radiologist will perform the Embolisation. Interventional Radiologists have specialist expertise in using X-ray and scanning equipment and also in interpreting the images produced. They need to look at these images while carrying out the procedure.

Radiographers and Radiology Nurses will be present in the room to assist during the procedure, they will introduce themselves at the start of the procedure.

Occasionally Student Radiographers or Medical Students will be present to observe the procedure.

## Where will the procedure take place?

The procedure will take place in the Medical Imaging Department.

## How do I prepare for Embolisation?

- You need to be an inpatient in the hospital.
- You may receive a sedative to relieve anxiety, as well as an antibiotic.
- You will have had some blood tests performed before the procedure to check that you do not have an increased risk of bleeding.
- You are asked not to eat for 4 hours prior to the procedure. You may drink a little water.
- You will need someone to drive you home and to look after you for 24 hours.
- You should be prepared to stay overnight.
- If you have any allergies or you have previously reacted to intravenous contrast medium, you must let the doctor know. Intravenous contrast medium is injected through the catheter during some scans.
- If you are diabetic, please contact the Medical Imaging Department on **01392 402336 selecting option 2, in-patient enquiries, option 6 Interventional Radiology.**
- If you normally take any medication to thin your blood (anticoagulation or antiplatelet drugs) such as: **warfarin / clopidogrel / aspirin / non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS / brufen / ibrufen / nurofen) / dabigatran (Pradaxa) / rivaroxiban (Xarelto) / Apixaban (Eliquis) / phendione / acenocoumarol – then these may need to be stopped or altered. Please contact the Medical Imaging Department on 01392 402336 selecting option 2, in-patient enquiries and then option 6 for Interventional Radiology.**
- Other medication should be taken as normal.
- A pregnancy test may be performed on arrival.

## What actually happens during Embolisation?

You will need to have a needle put into a vein in your arm or hand, so that you can have sedatives or painkillers as required.

In the Medical Imaging department the Radiologist and other trained staff will ensure that you are sedated if appropriate. You will be monitored throughout the procedure and may be given oxygen if required. The Interventional Radiologist will keep everything sterile and will wear a theatre gown and operating gloves.

The skin of your groin will be cleaned with antiseptic and the rest of your body will be covered with a theatre drape. Some local anaesthetic will be injected in the groin to numb the area so that the catheter can be inserted.

On occasion access for the catheter may need to be from the arm area.

## Will it hurt?

You will feel the local anaesthetic being injected which will feel like a bee sting. After that you should not feel any pain, but may feel pushing sensations at times.

There will be a Nurse, or another member of staff, looking after you. If you are aware of any pain then you can let them know and they will arrange for you to have more painkillers or sedatives through the needle in your arm.

## How long will it take?

Every patient's situation is different and it is not always easy to predict how complex or how straightforward the procedure will be. It will take between approximately 1 and 2 hours.

## What happens afterwards?

The catheter will be removed and a member of the clinical team will press on your groin (or arm) for 10-15 minutes to stop the bleeding. Alternatively, you may have a closure device (suture) inserted to plug the small hole in your artery.

Your recovery will initially be in the Medical Imaging Nursing recovery bay until you are transferred to a hospital ward.

Post procedure Nurses will carry out routine observations, such as taking your pulse and blood pressure, as well as checking the puncture site. You will generally stay in bed for several hours until you have recovered. You should expect to stay overnight, therefore please bring your medication and an overnight bag.

Once you have recovered from the procedure, you will probably feel no different than you did before, however, some people experience a flu like illness (post embolisation syndrome) for a few days after the procedure.

You may experience some bruising and soreness where the catheter was inserted in to the artery in your groin (or arm) for a few days after the procedure.

## What will happen to the results?

A report of the procedure will be recorded on your electronic patient record immediately for review by your referring doctor.

## Are there any risks or complications?

You may experience some bruising and soreness where the catheter was inserted in the artery in your groin. Great care is taken to direct the catheter and Onyx to a very precise location in the body, however on rare occasions the Onyx can pass into the wrong area leading to problems due to lack of blood reaching this area.

You will meet with the Interventional Radiologist, who will be performing the procedure, for an outpatient consultation prior to the day of your procedure. At this appointment you will have the opportunity to discuss any risks or complications specific to you.

## Finally...

Some of your questions should have been answered by this leaflet, but remember that this is only a starting point for discussion about your treatment with the doctors looking after you. Do satisfy yourself that you have received enough information about the procedure before you sign the consent form.

## Contact us

If you found reading your leaflet difficult, you do not understand what it means for you, or if you have any queries or concerns you can contact us on: **01392 402336**, option 2 option 6 and we can talk it through or alternatively you can email us

**[rduh.radiologyappointments@nhs.net](mailto:rduh.radiologyappointments@nhs.net)**

## How to get to the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital at Wonford

**Please refer to the enclosed "Welcome to the Medical Imaging Department" leaflet or use the Trusts website for the latest information:**

**[www.royaldevon.nhs.uk/our-sites](http://www.royaldevon.nhs.uk/our-sites)**

For more information on the Medical Imaging Department, please visit our website:

**[www.royaldevon.nhs.uk/services/radiology-x-ray-and-medical-imaging](http://www.royaldevon.nhs.uk/services/radiology-x-ray-and-medical-imaging)**

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