

Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA)

Your doctor has asked us for us to perform an RFA procedure. We have designed this brochure to help you prepare for your procedure. RFA is a minimally invasive treatment suitable for some types of tumours. RFA involves delivery of high frequency electrical current into a tumour through a needle electrode. The high frequency current causes heat and cell death occurs. The dead cells are gradually replaced by scar tissue that shrinks over time.

Preparation

- You will be given instructions by our booking staff regarding the time of your appointment and any necessary preparation.
- You will be admitted to day surgery.
- Please shower on the morning of your procedure before coming to the hospital.
- You are required to fast for 4 hours prior to this procedure.
- Take your normal medications with a sip of water.
- You need to notify us and your referring doctor if you are on blood thinning medications or injections (eg aspirin, warfarin, coumadin, Plavix or Clexane etc.) or if you are taking fish oil or krill oil as these also increase the risk of bleeding. These may need to be stopped for several days before the procedure.
- Bring your previous X-rays, ultrasound, CT and MRI scans if these were not performed at our clinic.
- You will be changed into a hospital gown and an intravenous line will be inserted.

Procedure

- You will be taken from day surgery to the radiology department. A specialist Radiologist performs the procedure assisted by nursing and technical staff. The Radiologist will explain the procedure to you and ask you to sign a consent form.
- You will be given intravenous sedation which will

make you calm and relaxed during the procedure.

- The insertion site for the electrode is sterilised and made numb with local anaesthetic. The radiologist will place the electrode into the tumour using imaging guidance (usually a CT scan). The electrical current is then applied at which time some heat may be felt.
- The electrode is then removed and pressure applied to the entry site to help stop any bleeding. A dressing is applied to the wound. No stitches are required.

Post procedure

- You will initially be observed in the radiology department and then returned to day surgery. You need to rest in bed for around 2 hours after the procedure to minimise the risk of bleeding or bruising at the insertion site. The nurses will monitor your vital signs and check your dressing. You can eat and drink during this time.
- You will then need someone to drive you home where you should relax until the following next day. Sporting and other strenuous activity should be avoided for at least 5 days after the procedure to allow the area to recover. Your particular circumstances can be discussed with the radiology staff at the time of your procedure.
- Paracetamol should help with any pain once the local anaesthetic wears off.
- Some patients experience mild flu like symptoms for up to 5 days after the procedure and these can also be controlled with paracetamol.
- The dressing can be removed the day after the procedure.

If you experience bleeding or excessive bruising/swelling, redness or other evidence of infection please contact our clinic nurses between 8.00am and 6.00pm. Outside these hours please contact your local emergency centre or referring doctor.