



**If you have any questions or concerns, call the Registered Nurse at 705-325-2201 ext: 3497
Monday-Friday 0800-1600hrs. If any urgent concerns go to the Emergency Department**

What Is a Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA)?

Radiofrequency ablation (RFA) uses heat to kill cancer cells. High-frequency electrical currents are passed through a special needle or probe called a needle electrode. The electrical current from the probe heats a small area containing cancer cells to high temperatures, killing the cancer cells. The area around the tumour is also usually treated because it may contain cancer cells.

Why Do I Need a Radiofrequency Ablation?

RFA may be done to treat some tumours if the cancer is in a position that makes surgery difficult or if you can't have surgery because of other health problems. It is usually used for tumours smaller than 5 cm across. RFA can be given alone or with other cancer treatments.

How Is The Procedure Done?

Before:

Your doctor will arrange for bloodwork prior to the procedure. Your doctor will also ask you to stop any blood thinners you take. Talk to your doctor about which medications need to be stopped prior to the procedure, for how long, and when you can safely start them again. You may have a light breakfast or lunch before the procedure. You may take any needed medications (**except blood thinners**) with small sips of water.

You will need someone to drive you home after the procedure.

During:

It is done by using a local anesthetic to numb the area and conscious sedation to make you drowsy. A biopsy of the mass will be taken as well. You will have a CT scan and/or an ultrasound to help the radiologist guide the probe or needle into the right position.

Once the probe is in place, an electrical current is sent through to the tip. More than one probe may be used if you have a large tumour or more than one tumour. The radiologist can adjust the heat based on the size of the tumour. The treatment can take anywhere from 30 minutes to 3 hours.

After:

Pain

- You may have pain at the needle/probe insertion site for 3-5 days after the procedure. This is normal. Sometimes the pain moves up to your shoulder. The doctor will recommend medications to help control this pain.

Post ablation Syndrome

- After your procedure you may feel like you have the flu. You may have a fever, feel discomfort or feel ill. This is normal. It may start 2-3 days after your procedure and can last 2-3 days. During this time rest and drink plenty of fluids. This will help you feel better faster. A slight fever is normal for 48 hours. If it persists after 48 hours seek medical attention with your doctor or the emergency department.



Follow up

- You will be booked for a CT scan at 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, 9 months and 12 months post procedure to confirm if the procedure worked and if any follow up treatments are needed. The Diagnostic Imaging Department will contact you with the appointment dates.
- Rest for the remainder of the day following your procedure
- Have a responsible adult spend the night following your procedure
- Do not drive for 24 hours following your procedure
- Do not lift anything weighing over 5 kilograms (10 pounds) for 48 hours following your procedure
- Do not participate in sports or strenuous activity for 48 hours following your procedure

Diet

- You can eat what you normally eat

Medications

- If you need anything for pain or discomfort, take Tylenol (acetaminophen) for the next 48 hours. Follow the directions on the label.
- **Do not** use Aspirin or ibuprofen products, such as Advil or Motrin. These may increase the risk of bleeding
- Resume your usual medications unless instructed differently

Dressing Care/Sutures

- Remove the gauze dressing the day after your procedure

Bathing

- You may shower the day after your procedure
- **Do not** bathe or swim (especially in lakes) for one week. This may lead to an infection while the site heals.

What to Watch For:

- Sever pain at procedure site
- Chills/fever lasting longer than 48 hours
- Blood in your urine that persists more than 2 days. Some blood in urine is normal but if it becomes bright red and has clots seek medical advice
- Swelling, redness or discharge from procedure site
- Feeling unusually faint or light headed
- Trouble breathing or shortness of breath

If you experience any of the above problems then call your doctor, Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000), or go to your nearest Emergency Department. Take this sheet with you.

Use this material for your information only. It does not replace advice from your doctor or other health care professional. Do not use this information for diagnosis or treatment. Ask your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition.