

Percutaneous ultrasound-guided microwave ablation for symptomatic benign thyroid nodules

Information for the public

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This procedure works well for benign (non-cancerous) thyroid nodules that are causing symptoms. But there are known complications, including pain, bleeding and damage to other parts of the neck or throat. There's also a chance cancerous nodules could be treated, which risks cancer going undetected.

You can have this procedure if you have symptomatic benign thyroid nodules but your doctor should make sure you do not have thyroid cancer first.

If you have the procedure there should be support in place to quickly deal with any problems with the airway that might happen.

A thyroid nodule is a lump in the thyroid gland. Most are benign. In this procedure, a thin wire is inserted into the nodule under local anaesthetic and guided into position using ultrasound. Microwaves from the wire heat the nodule to destroy it (ablation). The aim is to make the nodule smaller, relieve symptoms and improve appearance.

You can [search the NHS website for information about consultants and hospitals](#) that offer this procedure.

Is this procedure right for me?

You should be included in [making decisions about your care](#).

Your healthcare professionals should explain the risks and benefits of this procedure and how it is done. They should discuss your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. They should offer you more information about the procedure. Your family or carers can be involved if you want or need them to be.

You will be asked to decide whether you agree (consent) to have the procedure. Find out more about [giving consent to treatment on the NHS website](#).

Some questions to think about

- How many appointments will I need?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- Will I have to stay in hospital?
- What happens if it does not work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I do not want the procedure?
- Are other treatments available?

Information and support

- [NICE's information on interventional procedures guidance](#) explains what an interventional procedure is and how we assess it.
- [NICE's information on interventional procedures recommendations](#) explains what standard arrangements are.

This organisation can give you advice and support: [The British Thyroid Foundation](#), 01423 810 093.

You can also get support from your local [Healthwatch](#).

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