

# Transvenous obliteration for gastric varices

Information for the public

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[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

Evidence suggests that this procedure works well and is safe in the short term. But, there is not enough long-term evidence about how well it works or how safe it is. So, it can only be done with special arrangements. This means you will have regular appointments afterwards to check how well it is working or if it has caused problems.

Varices are enlarged veins that can develop in the stomach (gastric) and can be caused by liver disease. They can burst, causing uncontrollable bleeding. In this procedure, a tube with a tiny balloon on the end is inserted into a vein (transvenous) in the thigh or neck and passed into the enlarged vein. The balloon is inflated to stop blood flowing into the vein. The vein is then blocked (obliterated) using one of several techniques. The aim is to reduce the risk of bleeding.

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 special arrangements are.

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

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