

# Percutaneous thoracic duct embolisation for persistent chyle leak

Information for the public

Published: 5 April 2023

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There is not enough evidence about how well this procedure 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.

Chyle is a fluid made in the intestines during digestion of fat. It flows around the body through a network of lymph vessels and ducts, including the thoracic duct. If the thoracic duct is damaged during surgery or by trauma, chyle leaks out (persistent chyle leak) and builds up in the body. In this procedure, under general anaesthesia, ultrasound and X-rays are used to create an image of the thoracic duct and find the leak. Then, using a needle, a tube is inserted through the abdominal wall (percutaneous) and guided into the thoracic duct. Small metal coils and medical glue are inserted through the tube and used to plug the leak (embolisation). The aim is to stop the leak.

The [NHS website](#) may have information on your condition and treatment options.

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](#).

ISBN: 978-1-4731-5083-6