

Endoscopic ultrasound-guided biliary drainage for biliary obstruction

Information for the public

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This procedure can be used for biliary obstruction caused by distal malignant disease because it works well and there are no serious concerns about its safety in this condition.

For biliary obstruction caused by malignant hilar or benign disease, this procedure can only be done as part of a research study. This is because there is not enough evidence to be sure how well it works or how safe it is in these conditions. Your healthcare professional should talk to you about the research.

Biliary obstruction is when the channels carrying bile from the liver and gall bladder into the small intestine (bile ducts) become blocked, usually by tumours or gallstones. Bile is a fluid that helps the digestion of fats. It is produced by the liver and stored in the gall bladder.

In this procedure, a thin tube (called an endoscope) with an ultrasound probe at the tip is passed through the mouth and into the stomach or small intestine. The blockage is located using sound waves and punctured. A short, wire mesh tube that acts like a scaffold (called a stent) is then inserted into the blocked duct. This allows bile to drain into the gut.

The [NHS webpage on gallstones](#) and the [NHS webpage on bile duct cancer](#) 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 for biliary obstruction caused by distal malignant disease.

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 and what only in research means.

These organisations can give you advice and support:

- [British Liver Trust](#), 0800 652 7330
- [Guts UK](#), 020 7486 0341

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

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