

# Image-guided percutaneous laser ablation for primary and secondary liver tumours

Information for the public

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

There is not enough evidence about how well this procedure works in the longer term. 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.

Liver tumours can start in the liver (primary) or spread to the liver from another part of the body (secondary). In this procedure, thin optical fibres are inserted through the skin (percutaneous) using a fine needle and into the liver tumour. The fibres deliver laser energy for several minutes, which heats the liver tissue until it is destroyed (laser ablation). Image guidance (such as ultrasound) is used to check the position of the fibres and to monitor the procedure. The aim is to destroy the tumour.

## 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

The [NHS webpage on liver cancer](#) may be a good place to find out more.

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

- [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.

[British Liver Trust](#), 0800 652 7330 can give you advice and support

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

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