

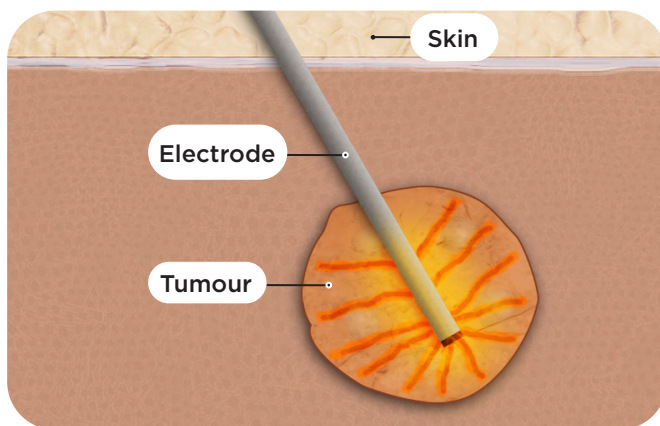
Radiofrequency thermal ablation



You'll soon undergo a thermal ablation procedure to remove tumours. This health sheet describes the procedure and reminds you what to do to make sure everything goes smoothly.

What is radiofrequency thermal ablation?

Thermal ablation consists of eliminating tumours by heating them. This is done by inserting a very thin needle into the tumour. At the tip of the needle, an **electrode** emits a radioelectric current. This creates heat only in the **tumour** and destroys it.



Why do I need this procedure?

This procedure makes it possible to remove certain tumours without surgery. There may, however, be some contraindications. Your doctor will assess with you whether this treatment is right for you.

Are there any long-term risks?

Thermal ablation usually doesn't cause any long-term side effects. But it's possible that it would have to be done another time if all the tumours haven't been destroyed.

How should I prepare for it?

- Don't take any aspirin or anti-inflammatory drugs in the days before the procedure. **You'll be told by phone which specific medications you shouldn't take and when to stop them.**
- **Don't eat or drink from midnight before the procedure.** However, if you're taking medication (and have been allowed to do so), you can take it with a little water.
- If you smoke, try to stop completely 7 to 10 days before the procedure. If not, cut back as much as possible. For tips, read our health sheet [*Quitting smoking before my operation.*](#)

What happens during the procedure?

- You'll be under general anesthesia (you'll be put to sleep).
- Using one or more needles, the radiologist will send a radioelectric current into the tumours. The radiologist is assisted by medical imaging technologists who observe the inside of the body using a CT scan or ultrasound. In this way, the electrodes touch only the tumours, with perfect precision.
- After the procedure, you'll be taken to the recovery room, where you'll stay until you're fully awake.
- The only traces of the procedure will be **small needle scars** on your skin.

Will I have any side effects?

- The most common are nausea the evening after the operation and lack of appetite for a few days.
- You might feel a little pain. But this is usually well controlled with painkillers such as Tylenol. If necessary, you'll be prescribed stronger painkillers.

When can I leave the hospital?

You'll be discharged the same evening or the next morning. You're not allowed to drive until the day after you leave the hospital, so plan for a friend or family member to drive you home. If no one is available, you can take a taxi, but don't use public transportation.

Are there any precautions to take AFTER the procedure?

Yes, to learn about these, read the health sheet [**Returning home after a thermal ablation.**](#)

Ask your healthcare team for it.

What follow-up will I have after the procedure?

In the weeks following the procedure, you'll receive a letter to come in for a follow-up exam by medical imaging (scan or MRI). This is to make sure the tumours have been removed and that everything is fine.



What should I do if I need to postpone my appointment?

Call the Radiology Department:

☎ 514 890-8450

Who can I contact if I have questions?

You can call the nurse in the Radiology Department during business hours, Monday to Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Outside of these hours, leave a message.

☎ 514 890-8000, ext _____



USEFUL RESOURCES

Other CHUM health fact sheets are available. Ask your care team which fact sheets can help you.



You can also read them online.
chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante

The content of this document in no way replaces the advice of your healthcare professional.

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