Information About Your Child’s Procedure

Cholecystostomy

Read this form so you understand the procedure and its risks. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand.

What is a cholecystostomy?
The gallbladder is a small sac-like structure under the liver. It stores bile that is secreted into the intestines to help digest fats. The gallbladder can become obstructed or infected. Treatment usually includes antibiotics and, if necessary, surgical removal. However, sometimes surgery is not an option because the patient is too sick or for other reasons. In these cases, an interventional radiologist will perform a cholecystostomy, a procedure in which a drainage catheter is placed in the gallbladder. This catheter keeps the gallbladder from getting too swollen, until the child is well enough for surgery.

How is a cholecystostomy performed?
Using ultrasound and live X-ray (fluoroscopy) for guidance, the radiologist will insert a small needle through the skin and into the gallbladder, and then place a tiny catheter into the gallbladder. The catheter will be connected to a drainage bag or bulb, which will be located outside of the body in the right upper abdomen.

Your child will be protected by an X-ray shield during the procedure.
Will my child be awake for the procedure?
No. We will use either intravenous (IV) sedation or general anesthesia so that your child isn’t awake.

What risks are associated with the procedure?
The procedure is considered low-risk. However, potential complications include:
• bleeding
• infection
• injury to the gallbladder
• bile leak (biloma)
• puncture of the lung (very rare)
• allergic reaction to X-ray dye (contrast reaction)
• right shoulder pain (radiating from the liver)

Will my child be in any pain after the procedure?
Some children feel pain or discomfort at the needle-insertion site, usually in the first day or two after the procedure. You may give over-the-counter pain medication.

How long will the catheter and the drainage bag be in place?
The time varies from several days to weeks or longer.

When can my child shower?
We will place gauze and a clear bandage over the site. The bandage must remain dry and in place at all times. In addition, the catheter will be secured with a locking device (StatLock®) which must not be removed. You may sponge-bathe your child, but please keep the site dry.

Are there any activity restrictions?
Your child will need to avoid activities that may result in a pull to the catheter.
CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR CHILD EXPERIENCES ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

• bleeding from the bandage site
• fever higher than 101° Fahrenheit
• leakage such as pus or bile (yellow-green liquid) around the drainage bag
• severe abdominal pain; right shoulder pain
• yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice)

Call Interventional Radiology between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 215-590-7000. At the first prompt push 1, and at the second prompt push 2.
At all other times, call 215-590-1000 and ask to speak to the interventional radiologist on call.

The Interventional Radiology team is here to help you and your child. Please ask us if you have any questions or if anything is not clear.

Thank you!

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