Information About Your Child’s Procedure

Percutaneous Transhepatic Cholangiogram (PTC)

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

What is a percutaneous transhepatic cholangiogram (PTC)?

A percutaneous transhepatic cholangiogram is an X-ray of the bile ducts (also called the biliary ducts). Radiologists and other doctors use the images to determine if the ducts are underdeveloped or blocked. If the ducts are blocked, the doctor may place a drainage catheter. PTC is sometimes performed at the same time as a liver biopsy.

Bile is a substance that helps digest fats. It is made in the liver and stored in the gallbladder. After meals, it is excreted into the intestines via the bile ducts.

How is a PTC performed?

Using ultrasound and live X-ray (fluoroscopy) for guidance, the radiologist will insert a small needle through the skin and liver and into one of the bile ducts. Then the radiologist will inject X-ray dye (contrast) into the ducts and X-ray images will be obtained. Your child will be protected by an X-ray shield during the procedure.

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Will my child be awake for the procedure?
No. We will use either 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)

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.

When can I remove the bandage?
Leave the bandage on for 48 hours. Then you may remove the clear bandage and gauze; do not remove the Steri-Strips® (white strips). If a drainage catheter was placed, it will be secured with a locking device (StatLock®) which must not be removed.

When can my child bathe?
Keep the site completely dry for the first 48 hours. After 48 hours, your child may shower or have a sponge bath, but you should continue to keep the area dry. Do not submerge the site in water (bath or pool) until the Steri-Strips have fallen off.

If a drainage catheter was placed, the site must remain dry. Your child may only take sponge baths until the catheter is removed.
CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR CHILD EXPERIENCES ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

• bleeding from the bandage
• fever higher than 101°F Fahrenheit
• yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice)
• severe abdominal pain; right shoulder pain

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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