

Thyroid Ethanol Ablation Procedure

Ethanol ablation is a procedure used to treat a cystic thyroid nodule. It involves using a small needle to remove fluid from the nodule or mass. The fluid is then replaced with an ethanol solution to destroy the nodule or mass. The treatment is safe with little risk.

The nodules should start to decrease in size after 2-4 weeks. The nodule will not completely disappear, but it may shrink over the next year. Some patients may need a second round of treatment based on the number of nodules and the size.

Getting Ready for Treatment

Arrival Time

Please arrive 30 minutes before procedure time. After you arrive, the doctor will explain what will happen and answer any questions. You will be asked to sign a consent form.

Safety Guidelines

Tell your doctor if you:

- Have a pacemaker
- Have any implants
- Are pregnant
- Are on any blood thinning medicine

Diet

You can eat normally before your procedure.

Medicines

We will review your current medicines. Most medicines will not affect your treatment. If you are taking blood thinners, ask your doctor when you should stop taking them. If you take aspirin, we suggest you stop taking it for 1 week before treatment.

What to Wear

Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes. **Do not** wear clothing that covers the neck.

During Treatment

For this procedure, you will lay on an exam table on your back with your neck slightly extended. We will clean and numb the area. You may feel some pressure but should not feel sharp pain. We will use an ultrasound machine to see the nodule clearly.

During the procedure:

1. Your doctor will insert a small needle directly into the nodule or mass using the images.
2. Your doctor will then remove the fluid inside the nodule.
3. They will slowly inject 99% ethyl alcohol into the nodule. The alcohol will stay inside the nodule for about 3-5 minutes, then will be removed.
4. The alcohol causes a reaction that shrinks the nodule and prevents fluid from forming inside again.
5. The doctor will hold pressure on the area for several minutes and then cover the site with a bandage.

Care After Treatment

Pain: You may feel mild discomfort during the procedure. After the numbing medicine wears off, you may be sore for 1-2 days. We suggest using Tylenol® for soreness. A small amount of bruising is also common for about 1-2 days.

Medicine: Keep taking all prescribed medicines.

Activity: You can return home or go back to work afterwards. You may resume your normal routine with no restrictions.

Diet: Keep following your normal diet. Drink plenty of fluids.

Wound care: You may remove the dressing after a few hours. You can shower normally.

Follow up: You will have a follow up visit and an ultrasound after 3-6 months.

When to Call

Call if you have any questions or concerns. Please seek medical help right away if you have:

- Redness, tenderness, swelling, or drainage from the procedure site
- Chills or a fever above 101°F
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Vomiting.
- Trouble swallowing
- Speaking, or breathing

Who to Call

If you have questions, please contact your provider through MyChart or call your provider listed in your After Visit Summary or After Hospital Care Plan. For a list of UW Health Clinics, visit www.uwhealth.org/.