What You Need to Know About Your PTCD Tube

Information for patients and families

Read this information to learn:

- what a PTCD tube is
- how to prepare
- what to expect
- how to care for your PTCD tube
- what problems to look out for
- who to call if you have any questions
What is a PTCD tube?

PTCD is short for percutaneous transhepatic cholangio drain. It is a tube put into a blocked bile duct to open it up and drain it. A trained radiologist uses the help of a special kind of x-ray to guide the PTCD tube to the right place.

Why do I need a PTCD tube?

You may have stones, cancer or another illness that is blocking drainage of your bile.
How do I prepare for a PTCD tube?

☐ Get your blood tests done 7 days before your tube is inserted. The doctor who scheduled your procedure will give you a requisition (an order form) for INR, aPTT, Platelets, and Creatinine blood tests. You can have your blood work done at one of our UHN labs (no appointment needed), or you can go to a lab in your community.

- Toronto General Hospital Diagnostic Test Centre
  Eaton Building – Ground Floor, Room 406 (EG-406) in the near the Elizabeth St. entrance.

- Toronto Western Hospital Blood Collection Lab
  Main Pavillion – 1st Floor, Room 1M-405 near the Nassau St. entrance.
  Phone: 416 340 LABS (5227) or 1 866 865 LABS

If you do not get these blood tests done, the hospital may have to cancel your procedure.

☐ Your doctor or health care provider may tell you to stop taking these medicines for a certain number of days before your procedure.

The table below is a guideline only. Talk to your doctor or nurse practitioner if you are taking any medicine from the list below. They will give you more instructions since it may not be safe for you to stop your medicine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medication</th>
<th>When to stop</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acetylsalicylic acid (ASA), NSAIDs such as ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve) or indomethacin</td>
<td>7 days before the procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clopidogrel (Plavix), prasugrel (Effient) or ticagrelor (Brillinta)</td>
<td>7 days before the procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medication</td>
<td>When to stop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warfarin (Coumadin)</td>
<td>5 days before the procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dabigatran (Pradaxa)</td>
<td>3 days before the procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rivaroxaban (Xarelto), Apixaban (Eliquis) or edoxaban (Lixiana)</td>
<td>48 hours before the procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dalteparin (Fragmin), enoxaparin (lovenox) or tinzaparin (innohep)</td>
<td>24 hours before the procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fondaparinux (Arixtra) and Argatroban (Acova)</td>
<td>Please consult your blood specialist (hematologist)</td>
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</tbody>
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- If you take a medication that is not listed above, let your primary health care provider know.
- If you have any kidney related issues or condition, let your primary care provider know.

☐ **Don’t eat or drink anything after midnight (12:00 am) before your procedure.**

☐ **Don’t take any medicines the day of your procedure unless your doctor who scheduled you for this procedure gave you different instruction.**
What should I bring?
You will need to stay in the hospital for a few days after you get your PTCD tube so we can check how you are doing.

Please bring:

• Your Ontario health card (OHIP).

• All of your medicines in their original bottles and a list of these medicines. This includes over-the-counter cold medicine, herbal supplements and vitamins. We will give you any medicine you need once you are at the hospital.

• Any special equipment you may need labeled with your name. This may include an oxygen tank, “puffers”, or tube feeding supplies.

When should I come to the hospital?
Come to the Medical Imaging Reception Desk 1 hour before your procedure.

For example, if your procedure is at 9:00 am, come to the hospital by 8:00 am. We need this extra time to get you ready for your procedure.

The Medical Imaging reception desk is on the 1st floor next to Tim Horton’s at Toronto General Hospital and on the 3rd floor, East Wing at Toronto Western Hospital.
What can I expect?

Before the procedure

1. At the reception desk, we ask to see your health card and check you in.
2. We tell you how to go to the Medical Imaging Day Unit (MIDU). A nurse will meet with you when you arrive.
3. The nurse asks you to remove your clothing and put on a hospital gown. The nurse also asks you questions about your health.
4. You lie on a stretcher, and the nurse starts an Intravenous (IV) line.
5. The radiologist talks to you about the procedure and asks you to sign a consent form which explains that you agree to have the procedure.

Remember

- We try our best to be on time. Please be patient if there is a delay.
- **Only 1 person** can stay in the MIDU with you after your procedure. Please plan ahead for a babysitter if you have young children.
- Taking pictures or video is not allowed in the MIDU for the safety and privacy of all patients and staff.

During the procedure

1. We move you onto the procedure table. A radiologist, nurse and medical radiation technologist are in the room with you.
2. We do an ultrasound to make sure we know the correct area to put in the needle used to give you the PTCD tube.
3. We give you medicines for pain and to help you relax.
4. The radiologist uses a very small needle to inject the right side of your abdomen with a local anesthetic. This medicine “freezes” or numbs that area of your body.
5. Using ultrasound and fluoroscopy (a special kind of x-ray), the radiologist guides the drain using a special wire into the bile duct. A small part of the tube stays outside of your body.
6. If the tube is capped, bile drains into your intestines. If the tube is left open, bile drains into a bag that is attached to the end of the tube outside of your body.

**After the procedure**
We take you back to the MIDU to recover. When you wake up from the anesthetic, we take you to an Inpatient Unit. You stay there for a few days.

**How do I care for my PTCD tube?**
The PTCD tube is in a place that makes it hard for you to care for it yourself. Once you and your caregiver feel comfortable to care for the tube, a community nurse may teach you how to care for it independently.

**What do I need to know about the dressing on my PTCD tube?**

- We use a sterile gauze dressing to cover the area where your PTCD tube goes in.

- To keep the tube in place for a longer time, we usually keep the tube firmly secured against your skin using a device. We will give you another pamphlet called “How to Change Your Drainage Tube Dressing”, to show you how to do stable tube dressing. You can also find this pamphlet on [www.uhn.ca](http://www.uhn.ca).

- If the device that secures your PTCD tube comes loose, tape it down until a nurse can change the whole dressing. **Do not remove the dressing. Your tube could fall out.**
Remember

- Keep the bag attached to your tube securely in place. To protect your tube, pin the bag to your clothes using safety pins or use the leg straps to keep it in place.

- Don’t pull or stretch the tube connected to the bag. Make sure to empty the bag often. Make sure you empty the bag when it is almost half full.

- Keep the skin around your tube dry.

- Clean the skin around your tube 2 to 3 times a week with normal saline and cover the tube with sterile gauze twice a week.

- The device securing the tube to your skin can be changed every 7 days unless it is dirty or loose.

- The connection tubing and the leg bag (drain bag) can be changed to a new one every 6 to 8 weeks.

- **Make an appointment to have your tube changed every 3 months or sooner when needed. This can avoid problems with the tube and keep it working properly.**
What problems should I look out for?

This chart has information about what problems may happen, how to prevent them, and what to do if they happen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>How to prevent it</th>
<th>What to do</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skin infection</td>
<td>Wash your hands before handling the tube and the dressing.</td>
<td>• Change your dressing every day, or more if needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clean the tube and the skin where the tube was put in 2 to 3 times a week with normal saline (you can buy it at your pharmacy).</td>
<td>• Clean your tube and skin with normal saline.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Check for redness, soreness or swelling in this area every day.</td>
<td>• Put an antibiotic ointment such as Polysporin on your skin where the PTCD tube goes in each time you change your dressing.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keep the skin around your tube dry.</td>
<td>• Then, put dry, sterile gauze over the tube.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Change your dressing every day, or more if needed.</td>
<td><strong>If it does not get better after 2 days, tell the doctor who ordered this tube for you.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain</td>
<td>It is hard to prevent this kind of pain. You can take acetaminophen (Tylenol) for pain or a pain medication that your doctor prescribes if you need it.</td>
<td>• If your pain gets worse, call the clinical nurse coordinator (see page 12) to make an appointment.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• We will check to make sure your tube is working correctly and that there are no problems.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• If the pain continues and the tube is not the problem, make an appointment with your doctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The tube has moved</strong></td>
<td>• Make sure your bag is firmly in place.</td>
<td>• If your tube is partly out, tape it in place. It is important to keep it in as much as possible because your new tube can go in through the same opening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your tube looks like it has partly come out or is completely out.</td>
<td>• Use safety pins or leg straps to secure the drainage bag to your leg tube.</td>
<td>• Call the Medical Imaging booking department (see page 12) to make an appointment that same day. Don’t wait because the opening path to your duct can close quickly. If it does, it will be difficult to replace the tube.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Don’t remove the device holding the dressing without help.</td>
<td>• <strong>After regular hours or on weekends, go to Toronto General Hospital or Toronto Western Hospital Emergency Department or the nearest emergency department to you.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Check your dressing every day to make sure it is securely in place.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There should be no pulling or stretching on the tube connected to the bag.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Empty the bag often.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fever and chills</strong></td>
<td>• Rinse your bag out with water every day.</td>
<td>• If your tube is capped, uncap it and connect it to a drainage bag. If bile drains, your fever and chills might get better, but you still need to call your doctor and follow his/her instructions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Keep your appointments to change your tube every 3 months.</td>
<td>• Call the Medical Imaging booking department (see page 12) to make an appointment to have your tube changed in the next 2 or 3 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• After regular hours or on weekends, go to Toronto General Hospital or Toronto Western Hospital Emergency Department or the nearest emergency department to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bile leaking from around your tube</strong></td>
<td>• Look to see if you have any kinks in the tubing. If you do, straighten them out.</td>
<td>• If your tube is capped, uncap it and attach it to a drainage bag. This lets bile drain out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If you don’t, it means it is blocked on the inside. This kind of block is hard to prevent.</td>
<td>• Call the Medical Imaging booking department (see page 12) to make an appointment for a tube change on the next day.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make sure the tube is being flushed by your community nurse if this was ordered by your doctor.</td>
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Who do I call if I have any questions?

Call your doctor who referred you for a PTCD tube if you have any other questions about the drain or your care.

Call the clinical nurse coordinator if you have any problems with your PTCD tube:

Toronto General Hospital
Phone: 416 340 4800 extension 5403

Toronto Western Hospital
Phone: 416 603 5800 extension 6301

To schedule an appointment
For regular tube changes, call the Medical Imaging Central Booking office to make an appointment.

When you call, tell the clerk that you need an outpatient appointment for a PTCD tube change in the Interventional Radiology Department.

Phone: 416 340 4800 extension 3384
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Visit www.uhnpatienteducation.ca for more health information.

Contact us to provide feedback or request this brochure in a different format, such as large print or electronic formats: pfep@uhn.ca