

Electrohydraulic lithotripsy for difficult-to-treat bile duct stones

Information for the public

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This procedure works well for difficult-to-treat bilestones, but there is not enough evidence about how safe it is. This type of procedure can cause complications. So, it can only be done with special arrangements. This means you will have regular appointments afterwards to check how well it is working or if it has caused problems. The procedure should only be done in specialised centres with experience of managing difficult-to-treat bile duct stones.

Stones in the bile ducts can block the flow of bile out of the liver and the gallbladder. This procedure is done under general anaesthetic. A tube with a camera on the end is passed through the mouth, stomach and the small intestine and into the bile ducts. A probe is passed through the tube. It sends an electric current into liquid surrounding the stone. This creates very small pressure-waves (electrohydraulic) that break up the stone (lithotripsy).

The [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk) may have information on your condition and treatment options.

Is this procedure right for me?

You should be included in [making decisions about your care](#).

Your healthcare professionals should explain the risks and benefits of this procedure and how it is done. They should discuss your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. They should offer you more information about the procedure. Your family or carers can be involved if you want or need them to be.

You will be asked to decide whether you agree (consent) to have the procedure. Find out more about [giving consent to treatment on the NHS website](#).

Some questions to think about

- How many appointments will I need?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- Will I have to stay in hospital?
- What happens if it does not work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I do not want the procedure?
- Are other treatments available?

More information

- [NICE's information on HealthTech guidance](#) explains what HealthTech is and how we assess it.
- [NICE's information on HealthTech recommendations](#) explains what only in research means.

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