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Radiofrequency Ablation for Treatment of Liver Tumors

There are many techniques to treat hepatic tumors with minimal invasiveness including transarterial chemoembolization (TACE), percutaneous ethanol injection (PEI) and radiofrequency ablation (RFA). After a careful evaluation, radiofrequency ablation is recommended for treating your hepatic tumors. Please take the following precautions before receiving the RFA treatment, so that the operation can go smoothly.

I. Indications for radiofrequency ablation (RFA):

1. Curative treatment: applicable to one to three tumors with a diameter less than 5cm.
2. Palliative treatment: applicable to tumors that are inoperable or respond poorly to TACE.

II. How is radiofrequency ablation performed?

Before radiofrequency ablation, local anesthesia and intravenous injection of short-acting tranquilizer are given, if necessary. Then, the doctor will insert a electrode probe percutaneously into the liver tumor under the guidance of ultrasound or CT scan. The heat energy from the probe can induce coagulative necrosis of the hepatic tumor in order to destroy the tumor cells.

III. Preparation before treatment:

1. Your doctor will explain the examination process, potential risks and complications. You have to sign the informed consent before treatment.
2. Before RFA, nurses will shave the hair on both of your thighs to facilitate the electrode patches firmly attached to your thighs.

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All information above has been reviewed by Gastroenterology specialists

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3. If the treatment is scheduled in the morning, fasting is required starting from midnight; if it is scheduled in the afternoon, fasting is required after breakfast.
4. Adequate intravenous fluid supply will be given in the morning on the day of RFA.
5. Take off your underwear and put on the patient gown and shorts.
6. Go to the toilet before the procedure and insert an urinary catheter if necessary.

IV. Precautions after treatment:

1. If you receive CT-guided RFA, you must keep fasting for 6 hours after RFA; if you received ultrasound-guided RFA, you must keep fasting until the follow-up ultrasound on the next day of RFA, except when taking medications. You can start eating and drinking if there is no internal bleeding and no further treatment needed. Please follow the doctor's instructions.
2. After the treatment, you need to compress the puncture site with a sandbag for 6 hours and stay in bed for 12 hours.
3. After the treatment, you should pay attention to the symptoms related to bleeding or abdominal discomfort. If you suffer from severe dizziness, palpitation, abdominal pain, dyspnea or other discomforts, please tell your nurse.
4. The nurse will regularly record your vital signs including blood pressure, pulse rate, and breathing; and check the puncture wound and the sandbag position.
5. If you need to go to the toilet while staying in bed, please use a bed pan with your family's help. DO NOT get out of bed in order to prevent internal hemorrhage.
6. The bandage on the puncture site can be removed 24 hours after treatment. Please keep the wound dry.
7. After the treatment, some patients may suffer from abdominal pain, mild fever or elevation of liver function. Liver function usually begins to function normally in 2 to 7 days.

V. Precautions after discharge from the hospital:

1. Attend your follow-up appointment according to the doctor's advice.
2. You can take the painkiller prescribed by the doctor if you feel abdominal pain.
3. Go see a doctor immediately or call us if you have severe abdominal pain, cold sweat, prolonged body temperature over 38.5 ° C or chills.

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1. If you need to go to the toilet while staying in bed, please use a bed pan with your family' s help. DO NOT get out of bed in orderbed to prevent internal hemorrhage.
2. The bandage on the puncture site can be removed 24 hours after treatment Please keep the wound dry.
3. After the treatment, some patients may suffer from abdominal pain, mild fever or elevation of liver function. Liver function usually begins to function normally in 2 to 14 days.
4. Go see a doctor immediately or call us if you have severe abdominal pain, cold sweat, prolonged body temperature over 38.5 °C or chills.
5. You can take the painkiller prescribed by the doctor if you feel abdominal pain.