

Interventional Radiology Cancer Treatments

What are Interventional Radiology (IR) cancer treatments?

Interventional radiology is a relatively new field of medicine that utilizes a less-invasive approach to both diagnosis and treatment with regards to cancer. There are two basic approaches to treatment/diagnosis. The first is the use of a radiofrequency or other ablation probe which is placed under imaging guidance into the body and into the tumor through the skin. The other approach would be through the artery. Typically, the artery in the right groin (common femoral artery) is accessed through the skin. Using different small tubes (catheters) and wires, the artery supplying the tumor is accessed. A small amount of contrast is injected to confirm location. At this point, either beads with radiation, beads with no radiation or beads laced with chemotherapy are injected into the tumor.

Common Uses

- Hepatocellular carcinoma (liver cancer)
- Metastatic disease to the liver (most commonly from breast or colon)
- Cholangiocarcinoma
- Renal cell carcinoma (kidney cancer)
- Lung cancer
- Painful bony metastatic disease

Safety

The fluoroscopy or CT machine used in these procedures does use radiation. Typically, radiation doses are safe and do not require any precautions after the procedure, with a few small exceptions. The Interventional Radiologist physician will discuss these rare exceptions prior to the procedure.

Food and drink

The patient shall not eat or drink anything after the midnight prior to the procedure.

When to arrive

Appointments are made with the ARC at the main hospital and arrival time is typically 1-1.5 hours prior to the planned procedure time.

Contrast medium

IV contrast is used in the procedures that require right groin access. Labs will be drawn prior to the procedure to ensure safety. If you have a history of any kind of reaction to contrast administration, please let the staff know.