Varicocele Embolization

What is varicocele embolization?
Varicocele embolization is a minimally invasive procedure to treat varicose veins of the testicles and scrotum. The doctor places a small thin tube (catheter) into the vein in the neck or groin and then shuts off blood flow to the dysfunctional vein(s) in the testicles or scrotum.

How is varicocele embolization performed?
You will arrive early for your procedure so that a nurse can check you in and you can speak with a doctor to make sure all of your questions are answered. Once you are ready, the nurse will start an IV so that he/she can give you medications to be sure you are comfortable and pain free. The area over the vessel in the neck or groin will be sterilized and the doctor will numb the area with a local anesthetic. The doctor then uses real-time x-ray and ultrasound to guide a thin tube (catheter) into the vein. X-ray dye (contrast) is then injected to make the blood vessels visible on x-ray and find the varicocele’s blood supply. Once the doctor finds the blood vessels, the blood flow will then be blocked to the abnormal veins. Once blood flow is blocked, there will be less pressure on the varicocele and symptoms should improve. The catheter will be removed from the vessel. Once the procedure is complete, you will stay in bed for a short time after the procedure to prevent bleeding. Most patients go home the same day.

Pre-Procedure Checklist
- You will need to pre-register before your appointment by calling 540-224-5200.
- Check in 1 hour and 30 minutes prior to your appointment time in the main lobby of Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital.
- You may not eat or drink after midnight the night before your procedure.
- You may take important medications (blood pressure, heart, etc) with a small sip of water.
- Please dress comfortably and leave your valuables at home.
- You need a responsible adult to drive you home.
- Bring a list of your medications with you for the nurse to review.
- If you are taking medications that thin your blood, you will need to consult the department for specific recommendations to decrease the risk of bleeding. You may call us at 540-981-7083 to speak with a nurse.
Immediately following your procedure

- No driving, operating heavy machinery, or making any important decisions for 24 hours.
- Light activity only for 24 hours after your procedure. Do not lift anything over 10 pounds.
- You may gradually resume your normal activity over the next few days.
- Have a responsible adult stay with you overnight.
- Start with light food. If you have no problems, you may progress to a regular diet.
- Drink plenty of liquids for the next 2 days to help your body clear the IV contrast that was used for your procedure.
- You may remove the bandage after 48 hours and shower normally at that time.
- No creams, lotions or ointments should be applied to the site.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages and smoking or being around those who are smoking today.

What to report to your doctor

- If you become weak, faint, or dizzy
- If you develop severe pain
- Fevers greater than 101° F or chills
- If you have numbness or a change in color in your arm or leg
- Bleeding or swelling at the site
  - If you experience bleeding, immediately hold firm pressure over the site and have someone call 911.

For additional information, please visit:
http://www.sirweb.org/patients/varicoceles/

References:
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