

## Electrocautery Information

Electrocauterization is a routine surgical procedure. A surgeon or doctor uses electricity to heat tissue in order to:

- prevent or stop bleeding after an injury or during surgery
- remove abnormal tissue growth
- prevent infection

### Why is electrocauterization used?

#### **Surgery**

A surgeon may use this technique to cut through soft tissue during surgery so they can gain access to a particular site. Electrocauterization allows your surgeon to seal off blood vessels that are bleeding during surgery. Sealing off blood vessels helps prevent blood loss and keeps the site clean.

#### **Tumor removal**

This method is sometimes used to remove abnormal tissue growth, such as a tumor. This approach is common for growths located in sensitive areas that are difficult to reach, such as your brain.

#### **Nasal treatment**

If you get frequent nosebleeds, they're likely being caused by an exposed blood vessel in your nose. Your doctor may recommend this type of treatment even if your nose isn't bleeding at the time you seek medical advice.

#### **Wart removal**

This technique is frequently used to treat genital warts or warts on other areas of the body. Wart removal usually only requires one treatment.

### How do you prepare for electrocauterization?

No special preparation is needed for this procedure. In the case of excessive bleeding, your doctor may take a blood sample to test for anemia or a clotting disorder. Frequent nosebleeds are one example of excessive bleeding.

Several days before your surgery, your doctor may tell you to stop taking blood-thinning medications such as:

- aspirin
- ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin)
- warfarin (Coumadin)

Your doctor will tell you not to eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your procedure. You should also try to avoid smoking on the days leading up to your surgery.

### **What are the risks of electrocauterization?**

The treatment itself has minimal risks. Risks of electrocauterization may include:

- slight bleeding
- infection; your doctor may give you antibiotics to reduce this risk
- pain or mild discomfort; your doctor may prescribe you pain medication for after the procedure

Tell your doctor if you have a pacemaker or prosthetic joint before undergoing this treatment.

### **What's the long-term outlook for people who receive electrocauterization?**

Electrocauterization should effectively stop bleeding if it's used during surgery or after an injury. After surgery, you may notice swelling, redness, and mild pain. Depending on the surgery performed, you may develop scar tissue afterward.

In treatment of a tumor or wart, all abnormal tissue growth will be removed. The heat from the probe should sterilize the site. Typically, there's no need for stitches.

Your recovery time after treatment will depend on the size of the treated area and the amount of tissue removed. Healing usually takes place within two to four weeks. It may take longer if a large area of tissue has been treated.