

# Having talc powder inserted around your lung to prevent build up of air or fluid

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Produced: April 2021

Review: April 2024

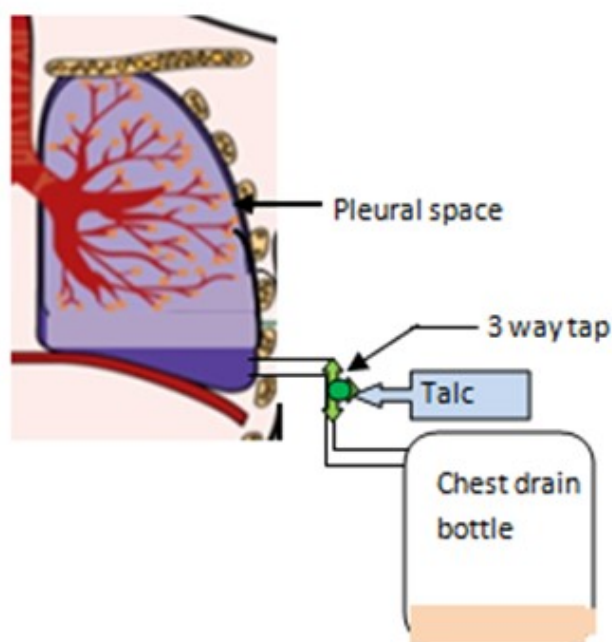
Information for Patients

Leaflet number: 1167 Version: 1

## What is talc pleurodesis?

Talc pleurodesis is a medical procedure that involves putting sterile medical talcum powder (talc) into the space between the inner and outer lining of the lung known as **pleural space**, to cause irritation in the lung linings (also called pleura). This irritation causes the inner and outer linings of the lung to stick together which closes the pleural space.

The talc is usually mixed with sterile fluid and given through your chest drain (the tube which has been inserted into your pleural space to drain air or fluid). There is a 3 way tap system to ensure the talc goes into your pleural space and not the drain bottle.



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## Why do I need a talc pleurodesis procedure?

Between the 2 linings of the lung, there is a very small space (pleural space) which is usually almost dry. Sometimes fluid or air can collect in this space preventing your lung from expanding. This can make it hard to breathe.

Build up (accumulation) of fluid in this space is called **pleural effusion**. Accumulation of air in the pleural space is called a **pneumothorax**.

This fluid and air is usually drained by having a chest drain inserted. A talc pleurodesis procedure is done after drainage to prevent any further fluid or air building up in the pleural space, by gluing both linings of the lung together.

There are other options to prevent further build up of fluid and air in the pleural space, such as an indwelling pleural catheter (IPC), but we usually try talc pleurodesis first because it is less invasive.

## What are the benefits of talc pleurodesis?

Talc pleurodesis prevents build up of fluid and air in pleural space. If successful it should help improve your breathing. It is successful about 80% of the time.

## What are the risks of talc pleurodesis?

This is a very safe procedure with few risks. The doctor doing the procedure will discuss the risks with you, when asking you to sign the consent form.

Some possible side effects of the procedure are:

- **Pain:** this is common because talc causes irritation of the lung linings (pleura). We minimise this by giving painkillers and flushing the pleural space with local anaesthetic before the procedure. Any pain is usually only temporary and should go away within hours.
- **Fever:** irritation of the lung linings (pleura) can cause fever but this doesn't usually last long.
- **Infection:** the procedure is done under a sterile process to minimise any risk of introducing infection into the pleural space.
- **Shortness of breath:** you may have mild shortness of breath after the procedure which may last a couple of minutes. If this lasts longer let staff know.
- **Fast heartbeat:** you may feel your heart beating fast just after the procedure. This should resolve shortly.
- **Failure of the procedure:** the procedure is successful in about 80% of cases, meaning there is at least a 20% chance the procedure could fail to stick both linings of your lung together.

- **Allergic reaction:** there is a risk that you may be allergic to talc or the local anaesthetic. If you show any signs of this, the procedure will be stopped immediately and you will be treated.
- **Adult respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS):** this is when you have serious breathing difficulty. The lungs are unable to supply the body with enough oxygen and could result in death. This is one of the most serious possible complications but is very rare. It is reported to happen in less than 1% of patients that have talc pleurodesis. You will be monitored closely during and after the procedure to check for any signs of this.

## Who will carry out the procedure?

A trained health care professional such as a doctor, nurse specialist or physician's associate will carry out the procedure. Leicester's Hospitals is a teaching hospital so we sometimes have trainee health care professionals performing the procedure, but this will always be done under supervision of a trained professional.

## How is talc pleurodesis carried out?

You will be asked to sign a consent form to confirm if you are happy to go ahead.

The procedure will be carried out whilst you are still in hospital, either at your bedside or the procedure room.

First, your chest drain will be flushed and local anaesthetic will be given through the drain. This will be left for a few minutes for it to take effect. The talc will then be given through the chest drain. We will close off the drain for a few hours to allow the talc to work before opening the drain.

After the procedure, we will monitor you frequently for the next couple of hours, and also monitor the output from your drain.

## How long will it take?

Talc pleurodesis takes only a few minutes, however you will need to be monitored and have the output from your chest drain measured for at least 24 hours after the procedure.

## Aftercare advice

After the procedure you will be given painkillers as needed. You will be monitored closely within the first few hours after the procedure. If you feel unwell or notice any breathing difficulties, please tell a member of staff urgently.

We will monitor the output from your drain over at least 24 hours after the procedure, so you will need to stay in hospital for at least 1 day after the procedure.

If a lot of fluid or air is still coming out after the procedure, it means the procedure has not worked and further treatment will be discussed with you.

If the procedure has worked, your chest drain will be removed. If you begin to feel unwell after you are discharged, please seek urgent medical help by calling 999. You should explain that you have recently had talc pleurodesis and the reason for it.

## Contact details

You can contact staff from Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays) between 9am and 5pm:

Secretary to consultants: 0116 258 3488

Pleural Specialist Nurse: 0116 258 3975

Pleural Service Co-ordinator: 0116 250 2474

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