

Biliary Drainage

Thank you for choosing Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center. Please let us know if you have questions or concerns or do not understand the information we give you. Always ask us to explain words or phrases you do not understand.

What Is A Biliary Drainage Procedure?

A biliary (BILL e AIR e) drainage is a procedure to place a small tube (drain) in the liver. The drain allows bile to flow normally into the bowels (intestines), drain into a bag, or both.

Who Does This Procedure?

A specially trained radiologist and staff will do this procedure.

Why Do I Need A Biliary Drain?

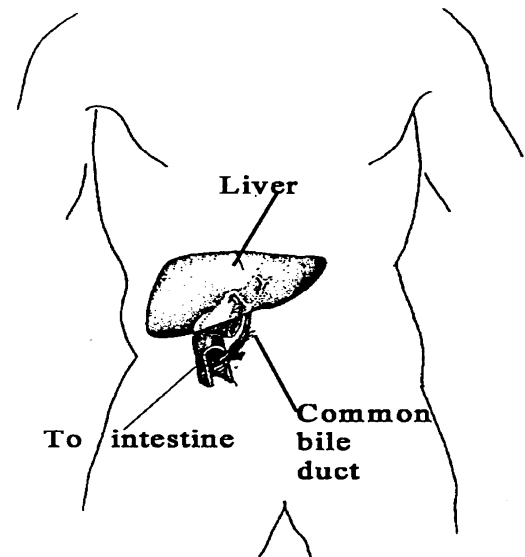
As a rule, people need a biliary drain when bile from the liver cannot flow to the intestines. Gall stones, tumors, and other conditions can block the flow of bile. Your doctor will explain this in more detail.

How Are Biliary Drains Placed?

A transporter will take you to the Radiology Department. You will lie on your back on an x-ray table. The staff will check your blood pressure and pulse. A nurse will start an IV (needle in a vein) to give you fluids and medicines.

Someone will use a special soap to wash a small section above your waist on your front and side. We will put sterile covers over the washed area.

The radiology doctor will numb your skin. He or she will put a small needle into your liver through the skin. X-ray contrast (dye) will be injected so the doctor can see the bile system better on x-ray.



Bile is produced in the liver. It goes through the common bile duct to the intestines where it helps with digestion.



The doctor will pass a guidewire through the needle into the bile duct. The doctor will remove the needle. He or she will pass a drain (tube) over the guidewire into the liver and place it in the bile duct or intestine. When the catheter is in place, the doctor will remove the guidewire.

Part of the drain is taped to the skin with sterile bandages on the exit site.

Will It Hurt? Is It Safe?

You may have general anesthesia (be put to sleep) or medicine in an IV to relax you and relieve pain. Staff will check you closely.

The procedure is safe when done by properly trained staff. It is not risk-free, however. Your doctor will explain the risks and benefits to you in detail.

How Do I Prepare for the Procedure?

Do not eat or drink anything six hours before the procedure.

What Do I Do After the Procedure?

We will attach the drain to a bag to collect the bile. A nurse will teach you and your family how to take care of the drain. Ask for a free copy of "Home Care for Your Drainage Tube." Before you leave the hospital, your doctor will review your activities to follow.

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This information is general. If your doctor tells you something different, follow his or her advice and instructions.

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