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## **Common Interventional Procedures and Definitions**

<b>Angiography</b>	An X-ray exam of the arteries and veins to diagnose blockages and other blood vessel problems; uses a catheter to enter the blood vessel and a contrast agent (X-ray dye) to make the artery or vein visible on the X-ray.
<b>Balloon angioplasty</b>	Opens blocked or narrowed blood vessels by inserting a very small balloon into the vessel and inflating it. Used by IRs to unblock clogged arteries in the legs or arms (called peripheral vascular disease or PVD), kidneys (called portal hypertension), brain, or elsewhere in the body.
<b>Biliary drainage and stenting</b>	Uses a stent (small mesh tube) to open up blocked ducts and allow bile to drain from the liver.
<b>Central venous access</b>	Insertion of a tube beneath the skin and into the blood vessels so that patients can receive medication or nutrients directly into the blood stream or so blood can be drawn.
<b>Chemoembolization</b>	Delivery of cancer-fighting agents directly to the site of a cancer tumor while depriving the tumor of its blood supply; currently being used mostly to treat cancers of the endocrine system and liver cancers.
<b>Embolization</b>	Delivery of clotting agents (coils, plastic particles, gel, foam, etc.) directly to an area that is bleeding, or to block blood flow to a problem area, such as an aneurysm or a fibroid tumor in the uterus.
<b>Fallopian tube catheterization</b>	Uses a catheter to open blocked fallopian tubes without surgery; a treatment for infertility.
<b>Gastrostomy tube</b>	Feeding tube inserted into the stomach for patients who are unable to take sufficient food by mouth.
<b>Hemodialysis access maintenance</b>	Use of angioplasty or thrombolysis to open blocked grafts for hemodialysis, which treats kidney failure.
<b>Needle biopsy</b>	Diagnostic test for breast, lung and other cancers; an alternative to surgical biopsy.
<b>Radiofrequency ablation</b>	Use of radiofrequency (RF) energy to kill cancerous tumors.

<b>Stent</b>	A small flexible tube made of plastic or wire mesh, used to treat a variety of medical conditions (e.g., to hold open clogged blood vessels or other pathways that have been narrowed).
<b>Stent-graft</b>	Reinforces a ruptured or ballooning section of an artery (an aneurysm) with a fabric-wrapped stent, a small, flexible mesh tube used to "patch" the blood vessel. Also known as an endograft.
<b>Thrombolysis</b>	Dissolves blood clots by injecting clot-busting drugs at the site of the clot. Treats blood clots in the brain to reverse the effects of stroke; treats deep vein thrombosis in the leg to prevent permanent disability.
<b>TIPS (transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt)</b>	A life-saving procedure to improve blood flow and prevent hemorrhage in patients with severe liver dysfunction.
<b>Uterine fibroid embolization</b>	Uterine fibroid embolization, also referred to as uterine artery embolization, is a minimally invasive interventional radiology treatment that cuts off the blood supply to the fibroids, causing them to shrink.
<b>Varicocele embolization</b>	A treatment for "varicose veins" in the scrotum, which can cause male infertility and pain.
<b>Varicose Vein Treatment</b>	The saphenous vein is sealed shut through the use of a laser or radio frequency non-surgically.
<b>Vena cava filter</b>	A tiny cage-like device that is inserted in a blood vessel to break up clots and prevent them from reaching the heart or lungs. Prevents pulmonary embolism.
<b>Vertebroplasty</b>	A pain treatment for fractured vertebra in which medical-grade bone cement is injected into the vertebra.

**About the Society of Interventional Radiology**

The [Society of Interventional Radiology](#) is a nonprofit, professional medical society representing more than 5,600 practicing interventional radiology physicians, scientists and clinical associates, dedicated to improving patient care through the limitless potential of image-guided therapies. SIR's members work in a variety of settings and at different professional levels—from medical students and residents to university faculty and private practice physicians. Visit [sirweb.org](http://sirweb.org). Follow SIR on Twitter at [@SIRspecialists](https://twitter.com/SIRspecialists).

**About Interventional Radiology**

[Clinicians in the field of interventional radiology](#) pioneered minimally invasive, image-guided treatment, which reaches the source of a medical problem through blood vessels or directly through a tiny incision in the skin to deliver a precise, targeted treatment. Interventional radiology treatments performed by board-certified experts can deliver solutions with less risk, less pain and shorter recovery time than traditional surgery. These treatments are delivered in collaboration with the patient's care team. The specialty was founded in the early 1960s. Today interventional radiology has become synonymous with modern medicine.