



Thyroid Nodules

Minimally invasive
treatment options



NORTH STAR
VASCULAR & INTERVENTIONAL

Benign thyroid nodules can be a pain in the neck...

The thyroid gland is a small, butterfly-shaped gland in the front of your neck. It produces hormones that help control how your body uses energy.

Non-cancerous growths on the thyroid gland—called nodules—can grow over time. When they do, they may cause symptoms such as difficulty swallowing, painful breathing, a large bump or bumps that protrude from the neck, and sometimes they cause an overactive thyroid (hyperthyroidism).





The benefits of minimally invasive thyroid procedures

Minimally invasive treatments like RFA and thyroid artery embolization:

- Are safer than surgery
- Require no general anesthesia
- Require not hospital stay or lengthy recovery
- Do not result in a neck scar
- Are less expensive than surgery

Our state-of-the-art outpatient treatment center is a more comfortable and convenient patient-friendly experience, and our providers have extensive experience in diagnosing and treating thyroid conditions.

Talk to your doctor about less invasive treatment options for thyroid nodules

If you have thyroid nodules and require treatment, it's worth your while to explore the minimally invasive treatment options at NSVI. If you have questions, call us! We are happy to help provide the information to help you make an informed decision with your doctor.

Treatment options

If a thyroid nodule isn't causing you any pain or other symptoms, your doctor may advise simply monitoring the nodules to look for changes that could cause a problem. When a nodule grows larger, a biopsy may be recommended, or a "fine needle aspiration" to sample the nodule.

During a thyroid nodule biopsy, an interventional radiologist uses ultrasound to guide a very small needle into the nodule to obtain tissue samples. The samples are then sent to a laboratory for evaluation, and to ensure the nodule is not cancerous. This can take 2 weeks to get results.

If the nodule is not cancerous, and is causing symptoms, there are several treatment options that providers may recommend. Hormone therapy is prescribed when nodules interfere with the production of thyroid hormone. Antithyroid medication may be prescribed when the gland is producing too much hormone.

If a nodule is large, surgery is often recommended. This can be in the form of a partial thyroidectomy or a total thyroidectomy, depending on your unique situation. However, a condition called hypothyroidism can develop after surgery, requiring life-long hormone medication. In addition, the surgery can leave a permanent scar on the neck.



Minimally invasive treatment options

At North Star Vascular & Interventional, we offer two less invasive treatment options, depending on the size of the nodules.

Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA)

Most thyroid nodules can be treated with radiofrequency ablation, a minimally invasive and precise treatment. During this procedure, an interventional radiologist uses imaging to guide a special probe into the nodule, where heat is used to destroy the nodule tissue without damaging the surrounding healthy tissue or compromising normal thyroid function.

Thyroid Artery Embolization

For patients with nodules larger than an egg (80 mL) and for goiters, a minimally invasive procedure called thyroid artery embolization (TAE) may be recommended.

This procedure also uses imaging to guide a catheter, which is placed into the artery in your wrist and driven up to the artery that supplies blood to the thyroid gland. Special particles are injected that become lodged in the smaller blood vessels, partially blocking blood flow to certain parts of the thyroid. This causes the nodule to shrink over time.

North Star Vascular & Interventional

The doctors at NSVI are pioneers in interventional radiology. Hailing from some of the region's most prestigious healthcare and academic institutions, they were among the first to perform certain imaging-guided procedures in the United States. In fact, NSVI doctors play a leading national role in training other doctors to perform minimally invasive procedures like thyroid nodule ablations.

NSVI offers the full range of minimally invasive vascular and interventional radiology services, including thyroid treatment, at their state-of-the-art Minneapolis-based outpatient center. Cancer, spine fractures, uterine fibroids, knee osteoarthritis, plantar fasciitis and vascular disease can be treated faster, less expensively and with greater precision and safety than ever before.

To learn more, visit NorthStarIR.com.



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