

# Urethral Bulking Agent

---

## **What is a urethral bulking agent?**

A urethral bulking agent such as Macroplastique, is a material that a urologist injects into the urethral wall for treating urinary incontinence. The bulking agent increases the resistance of the urethra and helps prevent urine loss due to physical activities such as coughing, laughing and exercise.

## **How is a bulking agent injected?**

Your urethra will first be numbed with a topical gel called Lidocaine. Your doctor will then insert a special cystoscope equipped with a fine needle into your bladder. A numbing medication (Lidocaine) will also be injected near the bladder neck. This will be followed by the bulking agent.

## **What are the expectations?**

The bulking agent should improve the urinary leakage by 50% and last for 3 to 9 months. However, over time the symptoms will gradually return. Only 15% of people still report improvement from the injection after 12 months.

## **What are the risks?**

Even though an incision is not made urethral bulking agents are considered an invasive procedure. All of the bulking agents are considered artificial implants and many will persist in the urethra after the effectiveness of the treatment wears off. Bulking agents are generally a safe treatment with little long term risks. There are certain risks that may occur which include but are not limited to: urinary tract infections, persistent urethral bleeding, pain on urination, new urinary urgency, more incontinence, erosion of implanted material, and injury to the urethra.

Side effects include difficulty with urination immediately after the injection, blood in the urine, and some temporary burning after urination. These side effects generally last less than 24 hours.

### **Contact information**

If you develop any signs of urinary infection such as fever of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, chills, persistent burning with urination, or persistent blood in the urine, you will be asked to contact the University Of Michigan, Department Of Urology at 734-936-7030 during working hours (8:00 am - 5:00pm). If there are concerns, questions or change in symptoms that need to be addressed after business hours or on weekends, please call 734-936-6267 and ask to speak with the Urology Resident on call. If you need to be evaluated by a physician on an emergent basis, please go to the nearest ER and have the ER physician contact the University of Michigan for assistance.

Disclaimer: This document is for informational purposes only and is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Talk with your doctor if you have Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options.

©2011 The Regents of the University of Michigan  
Last Revised February 2012