Management of Malignant Pleural Effusion

This practice algorithm has been specifically developed for MD Anderson using a multidisciplinary approach and taking into consideration circumstances particular to MD Anderson, including the following: MD Anderson’s specific patient population; MD Anderson’s services and structure; and MD Anderson’s clinical information. Moreover, this algorithm is not intended to replace the independent medical or professional judgment of physicians or other health care providers. This algorithm addresses the management of malignant pleural effusion in adult patients.

### PATIENT PRESENTATION

#### Therapeutic thoracentesis

- Chest x-ray PA/lateral
- Schedule follow-up with new chest x-ray PA/lateral within 2 weeks

#### Re-accumulation of malignant pleural effusion within weeks of initial therapeutic thoracentesis?

- Yes
  - ECOG score of 2 or less after therapeutic thoracentesis
  - Symptomatic improvement after therapeutic thoracentesis
- No
  - ECOG score of 3 or greater after therapeutic thoracentesis
  - Re-accumulation of malignant pleural effusion within weeks of initial therapeutic thoracentesis?

#### Endobronchial obstruction?

- Yes
  - Individualize care as clinically indicated
- No
  - Acceptable lung re-expansion?

#### Monitor for re-accumulation every 2 to 4 weeks:

- Yes
  - Chest x-ray PA/lateral
  - Clinical assessment
- No
  - Consider new therapeutic thoracentesis

#### Decision based on ECOG score:

- ECOG score of 2 or less after therapeutic thoracentesis
- ECOG score of 3 or greater after therapeutic thoracentesis

#### Consider as clinically indicated:

- Pleuroscopic pleurodesis
- Indwelling pleural catheter
- Endobronchial obstruction?

#### Symptomatic improvement after therapeutic thoracentesis?

- Yes
  - Consider reimplementation of Management of Malignant Pleural Effusion Algorithm
- No
  - Consider other etiologies to explain symptoms

- Yes
  - Therapeutic thoracentesis
  - Indwelling pleural catheter
  - Consider reimplementation of Management of Malignant Pleural Effusion Algorithm
- No
  - Consider other etiologies to explain symptoms
SUGGESTED READINGS


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DEVELOPMENT CREDITS

This practice consensus statement is based on majority opinion of the Pleural Work Group experts at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center for the patient population. These experts included:

- Carissa C. Boney, BSN, RN, ANP
- Saadia Faiz, MD
- Clara S. Fowler, MLS
- Wendy Garcia, BS*
- Bruno P. Granwehr, MD
- Firoze Jameel, MSN, RN*
- Horiana B. Grosu, MD
- Carlos A. Jimenez, MD†
- Ariel D. Szvalb, MD
- Alda L. Tam, MD
- Garrett L. Walsh, MD
- Steven M. Yevich, MD

* Team Lead
† Clinical Effectiveness Development Team