

EMBOLISATION AS TREATMENT FOR ADHESIVE CAPSULITIS: AN INNOVATIVE SOLUTION NOW POSSIBLE AT THE H.U.B

Brussels, 21 January 2025 – The Department of Interventional Radiology at the Brussels University Hospital (H.U.B) is now proposing a promising and minimally invasive new treatment for adhesive capsulitis. Clinical results obtained to date confirm its effectiveness where other treatments have failed, even in the most advanced cases.

Adhesive capsulitis, also known as frozen shoulder, **affects approximately 2% of the general population and can affect as many as 10%¹**, with a **higher prevalence among women aged between 40 and 60**. This pathology, characterised by intense shoulder pain and progressive loss of shoulder motion, can have a considerable impact on the quality of life of patients, making everyday tasks difficult to perform.

This pathology evolves in 3 successive stages. First, **the painful stage**: nocturnal and progressive pain that can last from 2 to 9 months due to inflammation of the joint capsule. It is principally localised in the outer shoulder area and often radiates to the upper arm or even to the forearm and the wrist. The pain is constant but the shoulder remains mobile. At a second stage, **the stiffening stage**, the pain is intermittent and less intense. However, there is a stiffening of the joint and shoulder movement is severely reduced in all directions. This stage lasts an average of 10 months. Finally, there is **the thawing stage** that can last between 5 months and 2 years. This is characterised by a reduction in pain and a progressive increase in shoulder movement.

Present treatment includes conservative approaches, such as physiotherapy, the prescribing of anti-inflammatory drugs and cortisone injections. In the most severe cases surgery can be an option. However, for a **significant number of patients** these solutions remain **ineffective or insufficient**. The persistent pain and rigidity often limit progress, leaving some patients in a therapeutic impasse.

In the face of this situation, an **innovative technique of interventional radiology embolisation** is bringing new prospects for these patients. Embolisation consists of reducing the blood flow to the inflamed shoulder zones by means of a catheter inserted through a small puncture in the artery. Guided by imaging, this treatment targets precisely the vessels involved in the chronic inflammation and pain. **Preliminary results**, based on a number of clinical cases at the Erasmus Hospital (H.U.B), show a **significant reduction in pain and improvement in movement**, with a **rapid recovery** and **reduction of side effects compared to conventional treatments**. **If you would like to know more about our clinical cases, please contact us to discuss them directly with our specialists.**

Dr Fadi Tannouri, Head of the H.U.B Department of Interventional Radiology: *“Embolisation represents major progress in treating adhesive capsulitis. We have observed notable improvements in patients for whom conventional treatment had failed. This minimally invasive technique reduces pain and improves movement and the effect is lasting.”*

Dr Arnaud Bourguignon, specialist in interventional radiology: *“Thanks to embolisation, we can target inflammation sites. The feedback from our patients is very encouraging, in terms of pain relief and the resumption of normal activities. Our aim is not to use embolisation to treat all cases of adhesive capsulitis as a first choice of treatment but rather to include this approach in the existing treatment arsenal, notably for patients who are unresponsive to current treatment so as to improve the symptomatology and the quality of life of our patients.”*

PRESS CONTACTS

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¹Source :Zreik NH, Malik RA, Charalambous CP. Adhesive capsulitis of the shoulder and diabetes: a meta-analysis of prevalence. MLTJ Muscles, Ligaments and Tendons Journal. 2016; <https://doi.org/10.11138/mltj/2016.6.1.026>.

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ABOUT ERASMUS HOSPITAL

The Erasmus Hospital is located on the Erasmus hospital-faculty campus, which includes the Faculty of Medicine (around 3,500 students), the Faculty of Motor Sciences (around 1,100 students) and the School of Public Health (around 600 students). Opened in 1977 and now with a capacity of 1,048 beds, the hospital admits 25,000 to 30,000 in-patients a year and provides 350,000 to 400,000 consultations. More than 4,000 members of staff, in 80 different professions, contribute on a daily basis to providing care under the banner of ambition, excellence and well-being. The Polyclinique du Lothier and 2 external centres (the Traumatology and Rehabilitation Centre and the Geriatric Rehabilitation Centre) complete the range of care on offer. www.erasme.be

ABOUT THE JULES BORDET INSTITUTE

The Jules Bordet Institute is an integrated multidisciplinary centre, the only one of its kind in Belgium. It is an independent hospital devoted entirely to cancer. It is the only integrated cancer centre in Belgium recognised as such by the OECl (Organisation of European Cancer Institutes). For 80 years, the Jules Bordet Institute has been offering its patients cutting-edge diagnostic and therapeutic strategies to prevent, detect and actively combat cancer. The Institute has three missions: care, research and teaching. The Institute's international reputation attracts leading experts in the field of cancer. Its spirit of innovation has enabled it to participate in the development and discovery of major new diagnostic and treatment techniques, with the aim of bringing them to patients as quickly as possible. On 28 November 2021, the Jules Bordet Institute opened the doors of its new building on the ULB campus in Anderlecht. 80,000 m² entirely devoted to cutting-edge care, research and training in oncology, but also focused on patient well-being. It offers 250 in-patient beds and 43 day hospital places. The Jules Bordet Institute is also part of the H.U.B, University Hospital of Brussels, which brings together the Erasmus Hospital, the Jules Bordet Institute and the HUDERF (Queen Fabiola 's University Children's Hospital). This internationally renowned university hospital grouping, thanks in particular to new investments, guarantees high-quality care accessible to all, as well as excellence in research and teaching. www.bordet.be

ABOUT QUEEN FABIOLA UNIVERSITY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

The Queen Fabiola University Children's Hospital (HUDERF) is the only Belgian hospital dedicated exclusively to children and teenagers. By doing everything possible to ensure children's well-being, our hospital helps them to play an active role in their own development and to flourish in society. The hospital's mission is to care for and support children, teenagers and their families through comprehensive, multidisciplinary, humanistic care of the highest standard; to provide high-level teaching and research through a continuous process of innovation and knowledge development; and to make an active contribution to health education. The HUDERF in figures: 183 beds, almost 135,000 consultations, more than 36,000 emergency admissions and more than 41,000 hospital days per year. More than 3,700 operations are carried out in the operating theatre every year. More than 1,000 people currently work here, representing 750 FTEs (full-time equivalents), including 170 FTE doctors (52.5 postgraduate FTEs) and 440 FTE nurses and paramedics. www.huderf.be

ABOUT H.U.B

The University Hospital of Brussels (H.U.B) is the academic hospital of the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), which brings together the Jules Bordet Institute, the Erasmus Hospital and the Queen Fabiola University Children's Hospital (HUDERF) since 2021. As an international reference centre in the heart of the Brussels region, the HUDERF offers high-quality general, oncology and paediatric care. This excellent care, accessible to all, is enriched and nurtured by a dual approach of scientific research and teaching for the carers of tomorrow. In 2022, the H.U.B. will have more than 6,000 employees who share the following values: The patient's interest, Respect, Commitment, Solidarity, Diversity and Inclusion and Free examination.. www.hubruxelles.be