Minimally invasive thoracic sympathectomy, also known as endoscopic thoracic sympathectomy (ETS), is a surgical procedure in which a portion of the sympathetic nerve trunk in the thoracic region is ablated.

It is a minimally invasive division of the sympathetic chain used to treat hyperhidrosis, as well as facial blushing, Raynaud's disease, Reflex sympathetic dystrophy, and ventricular tachycardia.

**How does the procedure work?**

ETS is done with video-assisted thoracic surgery (VATS) using 2 or 3 incisions that are 5 mm on each side. The sympathetic chain is divided at the level corresponding to the condition being treated. Patients are generally discharged on the same day.

**Who is not a candidate?**

Patients who are not suitable for general anesthesia would not be considered ideal candidates for this procedure as well as patients with a history of chest surgery.

**What are the risks?**

ETS is a safe operation and usually no problems are encountered. As with any operation, problems can occur and there is a small risk of injury inside the chest.

**Risks include:**

- Compensatory hyperhidrosis
- Gustatory sweating
- Horner syndrome
- Pneumothorax
- Chronic rhinitis
- Hand dryness
- Pain

Rush University Medical Center is ranked among the best in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report* for Cancer care and Lung surgery.

Learn more:
rush.edu/thoracic-surgery-services
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