

What is a biopsy?

A biopsy is a procedure in which the doctor obtains abnormal tissue to be evaluated by a pathologist.

Common reasons for a biopsy:

A biopsy is performed for many reasons. It can reveal what the tissue removed actually is, or why it's abnormal. It may be able to tell if it is a malignant or benign tumor. Sometimes the abnormal cells are related to infection.

Patient Preparation:

Your doctor's office will need to schedule your exam. The day before your exam, you will be contacted twice: once for registration, and once for health information. Our Same Day Services Unit (SDS) will contact you to give you your time to be here. They will obtain a medical history and list of your medications. We ask that certain medications be held on or before the day of the test. Warfarin (Coumadin) should be held for 2 days. Aspirin, Plavix, Ticlid, and Persantine should be held for 4 days prior unless you have had a recent stent placed. If you're not sure, ask your doctor. We also ask that you bring any related x-ray reports or films with you. Finally, we ask that you only have clear liquids 4 hours before your test.

What to expect:

First you will be asked to report to SDS on the 1st floor. There, you will be asked to put on a gown, have lab work drawn, and an IV started. We will need to wait for the results of the lab work. Next, you will go to the radiology department. Some biopsies are done with the aide of ultrasound, fluoroscopy, or with CT. The doctors will decide which one is best for you. You will be scanned to find the best spot to perform the biopsy. Everyone's site is different. Your skin will be numbed. After the numbing has taken affect, you should only feel pressure. The doctor may take a few samples. A band-aid may be placed on the site after the exam is done.

After the exam:

When the exam is complete, you will go back to SDS. Your recovery time will depend on what area had the biopsy. While in SDS, nurses will continue to monitor your condition.

Risks:

There are some risks involved with the exam. The major risks are injury to the organ or structure where the abnormal tissue is, and includes bleeding and infection. Keep the dressing clean and dry. Whenever a biopsy is performed

near lung tissue, there is a potential for an air leak (collapsed lung). For this reason, sometimes a chest x-ray is done a few hours after the biopsy.

Report/Results:

A Radiologist, a physician experienced in radiology exams, will interpret the images. A report on the procedure will be available to physicians within 24 hours on routine exams. A signed report with the interpretation will also be sent to the healthcare provider that ordered the test. The sample will go to the lab to be evaluated. The full process usually takes a couple days, although some lab results may take longer to get back. You may check with your ordering physician for the report.

Biopsy

A Patient's Guide to
Radiological Exams

