

Computerised Tomography (CT) guided lung biopsy

Patient information leaflet

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road,
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital
Marshall Cross Road,
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA
Telephone: 01744 26633

www.MerseyWestLancs.nhs.uk

Author: Specialist nurse
Department: Respiratory
Document Number: MWL2284
Version: 001
Review Date: 31 / 07 / 2027

What is a lung biopsy?

A lung biopsy is a way of getting a sample of tissue from the lungs using a small needle. It helps us to find out what is wrong.

You will receive a letter or phone call telling you when and where to report. The biopsy will normally be done within 2 weeks.

A routine blood test is needed to check that your blood clotting time is within acceptable limits.

You must not have anything to eat or drink for 4 hours, before the procedure. You can take your medication as normal with a few sips of water.

If you are on blood thinning medications/anticoagulations, these will need to be stopped prior to the procedure as below:

Medication	How long to stop for
Clopidogrel/ticagrelor	7 days
Warfarin	5 days
Apixaban, rivaroxaban, edoxaban, dabigatran	3 days

If you are on any other blood thinning medication, please seek advice about stopping these from your doctor/nurse. Some diabetes medications also need to be stopped.

Space for your notes

General questions

Can I drive after the biopsy?

Someone must drive you home after the test. You should be able to drive again the next day if you feel well.

Are there any problems flying in an aircraft after a biopsy?

Normally you should not fly for 2 weeks. If you wish to fly in less than 2 weeks, please discuss this with your hospital doctor.

Discomforts of the procedure

The procedure should not be painful at the time it is carried out. Some people have a bit of pain afterwards once the anaesthetic has worn off. If you do have any pain, you can take a painkiller like paracetamol (up to 2 tablets, 4 times a day).

When can I go back to work?

You should be able to go back to work the day after the lung biopsy, unless advised otherwise. However, only light duties must be undertaken for 7 days following the procedure.

When will I get the results?

It can take up to a week for the results to come back to the doctor who asked for the test. You should have been given an appointment to come to clinic. If you have not heard from the hospital within 10 days of the biopsy, you should telephone the consultant's secretary to make another appointment.

What happens during the procedure?

The biopsy is done under local anaesthetic, a small injection is used to numb the skin.

The doctor who performs the test is an x-ray specialist, called a radiologist. An x-ray, Computerised Tomography (CT) scan, or ultrasound machine is used to let the doctor know exactly where to take the samples from.

The doctor gives the local anaesthetic and passes a small needle into the relevant area in the lung and takes some tiny samples of tissue. The samples are then sent to the laboratory and are examined under the microscope by a specialist called a pathologist.

It is usually a short procedure, but will take a minimum of 30 minutes.

After a period of observation on a ward, a chest X-ray will be taken before you can go home. Most people are able to go home after a few hours, but there must be someone to stay with you overnight.

There may be students and observers present during your consultation as part of their ongoing training. Please let the staff know if you do not wish any students to be present during your attendance.

Please ask a member of staff if you would like a chaperone present during your procedure.

Benefits of the procedure

Having a lung biopsy helps the doctor to establish your diagnosis. This is important for the doctor to know, in order to plan treatment which is appropriate to the diagnosis.

Risks of the procedure

The risks associated with having a lung biopsy vary from person to person and will be based on your individual circumstances. The doctor doing the actual biopsy (known as a radiologist), will discuss the risks of the procedure in more detail when they go through the consent form with you.

It is quite common for a little air to escape into the space around the lung during the biopsy. This may cause the lung to partially collapse. We call this a pneumothorax. Recent research shows this may happen in around 1 in 5 procedures.

Usually a pneumothorax is small and does not cause any problems. Rarely, (1 in 20 procedures), a moderate amount of air leaks out and causes a large pneumothorax. If that were to happen then we would treat it by either:

- Withdrawing the air out again with a needle (this is called an aspiration).
- Inserting a tube to let the air out (the tube is called a chest drain). If this happened you would probably have to stay in hospital for a day or two.

Please note: If you use a CPAP machine or NIV machine normally, please do not use it for 2 nights after the biopsy.

It is quite normal to cough up some streaks of blood at the time of the procedure, or for a day or two after it. Very rarely a more significant bleed can occur, in which case you should attend the Emergency Department.

If, after discharge from hospital, you suddenly become short of breath or have severe chest pain, this may mean that there has been an air leak (a pneumothorax). You should attend the Emergency Department.

Alternatives to the procedure

There are some alternatives to this procedure, for example a camera test known as bronchoscopy. However, sometimes the abnormal area in the lung is beyond the reach of this camera.

Please bring an overnight bag with you in case you need to stay in hospital overnight post procedure

Consequence of not having the procedure

If you choose not to have the lung biopsy you may experience a delay in establishing a diagnosis. This can cause a delay in starting treatment of your illness. Diagnostic uncertainty may also increase your anxiety.