

# Having a Percutaneous Liver Biopsy

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Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona  
w innych językach/formatach.

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## Having a Percutaneous Liver Biopsy

This leaflet tells you about having a Percutaneous Liver Biopsy.

It explains what is involved and what the possible risks are.

It is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor but can act as a starting point for such discussions.

If you have any questions about the procedure, please ask the doctor who has referred you or the department which is going to perform it.

## What is a Percutaneous Liver Biopsy?

A liver biopsy is a procedure that involves taking a tiny specimen of the liver for examination under a microscope.

In most cases, a liver biopsy is taken through the skin by passing a fine needle through the side of the abdomen into the liver.

## Why do you need a Percutaneous Liver Biopsy?

The doctors looking after you have decided that you need a liver biopsy to obtain more information about your liver problem.

The information gained from the biopsy will help the doctors in the treatment of your condition.

## Are there any risks?

A liver biopsy is a safe procedure, but as with any medical procedure there are some risks and complications that can arise.

The overall risk of a problem requiring further treatment is low (1–2%). The main risk is bleeding after the biopsy.

## If I am a day patient, what do I need to do after I go home?

You should rest for the remainder of the day and possibly for the next day, depending on your recovery.

- Have someone to stay with you overnight.
- Eat and drink normally.
- Take your usual pain relief, as prescribed, if you have any pain.
- Continue with your normal medication as prescribed.
- Keep a regular check on the biopsy site.
- Shower no sooner than 24 hours after the procedure, and bath no sooner than 48 hours after the procedure.

Please rest at home for a minimum of 24 hours.

Do not go to work or school on the day after the procedure.

Always follow the advice and instructions that the doctors and nurses have given you.

**If you feel you need urgent medical attention or are worried about anything outside of our normal opening hours, please contact your GP, NHS Direct/111 or go to your nearest A&E Department.**

## Finally

Some of your questions should have been answered by this leaflet, but remember that this is only a starting point for discussion about your treatment with the doctors.

## What happens afterwards?

You will be taken back to your ward on a trolley.

Nurses on the ward will carry out routine observations, such as taking your pulse and blood pressure, to make sure that there are no problems.

You will generally stay in bed for a few hours, until you have recovered.

Assuming you are feeling well, you will normally be discharged the same day.

You will need a responsible adult to take you home by car or taxi.

We do not recommend that you use public transport as it is unsafe if you feel unwell

## How will I get my results?

The biopsy specimens will be sent for examination.

Once the results are available, your doctors will discuss these with you.

## Who has made the decision?

The consultant in charge of your care and the interventional radiologist performing the procedure have discussed your case and feel that this is the best option. However, you will also have the opportunity for your opinion to be considered and if, after discussion with your doctors, you do not want the procedure carried out, you can decide against it.

## Are you required to make any special preparations?

A liver biopsy is carried out as a day case procedure under local anaesthetic.

In some circumstances a night stay in hospital may be required.

You may be asked not to eat for four hours before the procedure, although you may still drink clear fluids such as water.

If your blood clotting is abnormal, you may be given special blood transfusions to try and correct this.

If you have any concerns about having blood transfusions, you should discuss these with your doctor.

If you have any allergies or have previously had a reaction to the dye (contrast agent), you **must** tell the radiology staff before you have the test.

## Who will you see?

A specially trained team of Radiographer and Nurses led by an interventional radiologist within the Radiology Department.

Interventional radiologists have special expertise in reading the images and using imaging to guide catheters and wires to aid diagnosis and treatment.

All members of the team will be in scrubs during the procedure but will introduce themselves to you.



You will be given the opportunity to ask the interventional radiologist any questions you have.

You will need to sign a consent form before the biopsy can take place.

## Where will the procedure take place?

In the angiography suite. This is located within the cardiac catheter suite on the ground floor of Whiston Hospital.

This is similar to an operating theatre into which specialised X-ray equipment has been installed.

## What happens during a Percutaneous Liver Biopsy?

You will be asked to get undressed and put on a hospital gown.

A small cannula (thin tube) will be placed into a vein in your arm.

This means that we can give you any required medicines during the procedure, if you need it.

The procedure is performed using local anaesthetic.

The skin on the right side of the abdomen will be swabbed and covered with sterile towels. The skin will be numbed with local anaesthetic. Once the skin is numb, a biopsy needle is inserted accurately into the liver guided by using an ultrasound machine.

Usually, two to three biopsy specimens are taken. The samples are then sent to the laboratory for microscopic examination. The wound site is cleaned and a dressing put over it.

## Will it hurt?

When the local anaesthetic is injected, it will sting for a short while, but this soon wears off.

The biopsy needle when inserted into the liver will make a click and you may feel a sharp pinch inside the abdomen as the biopsy is taken but this will last only for 1-2 seconds.

## How long will it take?

Every patient is different, and it is not always easy to predict; however, expect to be in the Radiology Department for 1 hour