

Department of Radiology

Why do we recommend that you have a biopsy?

An abnormality has been identified on a scan organised by your doctor and they have recommended that a sample is taken for detailed assessment. This sample will be looked at under a microscope to help identify the problem and direct treatment.

What happens before the biopsy?

- **If you are on any treatment to “thin the blood”, such as warfarin, rivaroxban, edoxaban, dabigatran, apixaban, aspirin or clopidogrel it is very important to let us know via the contact details below.** This treatment may need to be stopped temporarily so that we can perform the biopsy safely.
- You should let us know if you are taking any treatment for diabetes.
- Most other medicines and tablets can be taken normally. You will be guided by the doctor who has referred you on this.
- You will have a blood test to make sure your blood clots normally, which will be organised by your doctor.
- You may have a light breakfast at least four hours before the biopsy – some tea and toast for example.
- You should be able to go home later the same day, but you should bring an overnight bag, in case you have to stay in hospital afterwards.
 - If you are a female aged between 12 and 55, your procedure should be carried out within the first 10 days after your period starts. If this appointment falls outside the first 10 days, please contact our office on 01603 286081 to re-arrange your appointment. However, if you have an IUCD (coil) fitted, or have been on the contraceptive pill for three months you can ignore this advice.

What does the biopsy involve?

- Your biopsy will be performed by a Radiologist.
- The Radiologist will determine where to insert the biopsy needle using a CT scan or ultrasound machine for guidance.
- You may be asked to lie on your front or back, depending on the site of the abnormality. The skin is cleaned with antiseptic and local anaesthetic is then injected into the skin. This usually stings for a minute or two before the skin goes numb. A small needle is then passed through this numb patch into the abnormal area. It is normal for several scans to be performed with the radiologist leaving the room each time, to ensure that the needle is placed correctly.
- Once the needle is positioned correctly the biopsy is taken, which can make a loud clicking noise. Sometimes it is necessary to perform the biopsy several times to obtain enough tissue.
- The whole procedure will take between 20 and 45 minutes, but the actual biopsy takes only a minute or two.

What are the risks of having a biopsy?

- There is a small risk of bleeding following any biopsy procedure. You will have been assessed for any increased risk. You will be kept under observation after the procedure to look for the signs of bleeding and discharged once it has been deemed safe.
- The chances of serious bleeding requiring blood transfusion, or a further procedure to stop the bleeding is less than 1 in 500.
- There is a very small chance of injury to other structures in the body, which is greatly reduced by using the CT scanner to guide the needle. Serious injuries requiring further treatment is extremely rare, but a period of observation may be undertaken if the radiologist has any concerns.

Is the biopsy always successful?

In more than 90% of cases, enough tissue is obtained. Sometimes the doctor analysing the tissue (Pathologist) may find it difficult to make a precise diagnosis on the small sample of tissue. In this case a repeat sample or different procedure may be necessary and your doctor should get in touch with you to let you know what happens next.

What happens after the biopsy?

- We will check your pulse and blood pressure regularly after the procedure. If after 4 hours you are feeling well and the doctors are happy, then you can go home.
- Someone else should drive you home. You should be able to drive again the next day.
- You should arrange for someone to stay with you overnight.
- It is rare to have any delayed side effects after the biopsy, but if you suddenly become short of breath or develop severe pain you should seek medical advice (see below)
- You can usually go back to work the day after the biopsy.
- The results of your biopsy will usually be sent to your hospital consultant

Accessing Radiology:

How to find us:	East Outpatients entrance and follow the signs to Level 2 Radiology. You can find more information at: www.nnuh.nhs.uk
Hospital transport:	If you are eligible for hospital transport, please telephone 0333 240 4100
Contact details:	Telephone: 01603 286081 Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm Email: nnu-tr.ct@nhs.net Website: http://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/departments/radiology-nnuh If you become seriously unwell out of hours, please contact the emergency services.

