



Education

Needle Biopsy

What is a needle biopsy?

A needle biopsy is a way to remove a sample of tissue or cells for testing. Your health care provider inserts a needle through your skin into a lump or area of concern to get the sample.

Other names for this type of biopsy are core biopsy and fine-needle aspiration.

When is it used?

Needle biopsies are used to find the cause of infection or inflammation and to see if a tumor is cancerous. If cancer is found, your health care provider will discuss the need for more tests and treatments.

How do I prepare for a needle biopsy?

Your health care provider will give you any special instructions necessary to prepare for this procedure. Ask your provider when and how you will learn about the results.

What happens during the procedure?

You will be given a local anesthetic. The anesthetic numbs just the area where the needle will be inserted. It should keep you from feeling pain during the biopsy.

Your provider may use CT (computed tomography) or ultrasound scanning to find the exact location of the tumor. This may make the test more accurate.

A needle is inserted into the tumor or organ to remove cells or tissue. The needle may have a cutting tip to help remove tissue. The needle is attached to a syringe and the cells or tissue are suctioned into the syringe. The cells or tissue are sent to the lab for testing.

Your provider may use CT (computed tomography) or ultrasound scanning to find the exact location of the tumor. This may make the test more accurate.

You may have a small bandage placed over the site where the needle punctured your skin.

What happens after the procedure?

You may have some swelling or bruising in the area of the biopsy.

Ask your provider what other steps you should take and when you need to come back for a checkup.

What are the benefits of this procedure?

The procedure helps in the diagnosis of various medical problems.

What are the risks associated with this procedure?

- The local anesthetic may not numb the area quite enough and you may feel some minor discomfort. Also, in rare cases, you may have an allergic reaction to the drug used in this type of anesthesia.
 - A small scar will form at the puncture site.
 - Internal bleeding may occur.
 - Infection may occur internally or at the puncture site.
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You should ask your health care provider how these risks apply to you.

When should I call my health care provider?

Call your provider right away if:

- You have a fever of 100°F (37.8°C) or higher.
- Pain or symptoms change or worsen.
- You notice a lot of swelling or any unusual drainage from the biopsy area, especially bloody drainage.

Call during office hours if:

- You have questions about the procedure or its result.
- You want to make another appointment.

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