

# What You Need to Know About Your Biopsy



UHN

## Information for patients and families

Read this information to learn:

- what a biopsy is
- how to prepare for the procedure
- what to expect
- how to care for yourself when you get home
- who to call if you have any questions

## What is a biopsy?

A biopsy is a procedure that removes a sample of your tissue so doctors can look at it more closely. A doctor with special training, called a radiologist, does the procedure.

## How do I prepare for my biopsy?

### Before the procedure:

- Get your blood tests done 7 days before your biopsy. Your doctor who scheduled you for the procedure will give you an order form for these blood tests. Go to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Central Lab for these tests. You don't need to make an appointment.

If you don't get these blood tests done, the hospital may have to cancel your biopsy.

Please visit the UHN Patient Education website for more health information: [www.uhnpatienteducation.ca](http://www.uhnpatienteducation.ca)  
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**Some medicines may increase your risk of bleeding during or after your procedure. Tell your doctor or health care provider if you are taking:**

- medicines such as acetylsalicylic acid (Aspirin®), clopidogrel (Plavix®), prasugrel (Effient®), ticagrelor (Brillinta®), ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®), naproxen (Naprosyn®) or indomethacin
- medicines such as warfarin (Coumadin®), dalteparin (Fragmin®), enoxaparin (Lovenox®), tinzaparin (Innohep®), fondaparinux (Arixtra®), dabigatran (Pradaxa®), rivaroxaban (Xarelto®) or apixaban (Eliquis®)

Your doctor or health care provider may tell you to stop taking these medicines for a certain number of days before your procedure.

- For your safety, plan for someone to take you home after your biopsy. If you don't, **your biopsy will be cancelled.** Plan to have someone stay with you overnight when you return home from your biopsy.
- Bring all of the medicines you take and a list of all the medicines you take with you to your appointment. This includes over-the-counter medicines like cold remedies, herbal supplements and vitamins. We will give you any medicines you need from your own supply once you are at the hospital.
- Plan to take a full day off from work. Please plan to have someone look after any young children you may have.

**The day of your procedure:**

- Don't eat or drink anything after midnight (12:00 am) before your biopsy.
- Don't take any Insulin the morning before your biopsy. Bring your Insulin and your syringes to the hospital in a bag with your name on it.
- You can take all other medicines you would normally take with a sip of water (except for blood thinners).
- Write your name on any special equipment you may need to bring with you, such as:
  - oxygen or puffers
  - supplies for your feeding tube (if you have one)

☑ Bring your Ontario Health (OHIP) card and blue University Health Network card.



☑ Check in at the Medical Imaging Reception Desk **1 hour** before your appointment. We use this time to get you ready for your procedure.

### **After you check in:**

- We bring you to the Medical Imaging Day Unit (MIDU).
- We ask you to change into a hospital gown.
- A nurse asks you questions about your health and medicine history.
- The nurse gives you an intravenous (IV) so that you can have pain medicine and medicine to relax you during your procedure.
- A radiologist talks to you about the biopsy and answers any questions you may have.
- The radiologist asks you to sign a consent form. Signing this form means you agree to have the biopsy.



We try our best to be on time. Please be patient if there is a delay.

One family member or friend can stay in the MIDU after your biopsy.

Taking pictures is not allowed in the MIDU.

### **What can I expect?**

1. We take you to the biopsy room on a stretcher.
2. The area of your body where the biopsy happens is cleaned with an antiseptic (germ killing) fluid. This reduces the risk of infection.
3. The radiologist uses a small needle to give you a local anesthetic (numbing medicine) in that area of your body. You will feel a sting, but your skin will become numb in a minute or so.
4. Once the area is numb, your radiologist places an ultrasound probe on top of your skin. This lets them see a picture of the inside of your body on a screen nearby.

5. Your radiologist uses this picture to guide a biopsy needle to the right place in your body, so they can take a sample of your tissue.
6. At the end of the biopsy, the puncture site (area on your skin where the needle went in) is covered with a bandage.

## What can I expect after the biopsy?

- We take you to the MIDU to recover. You are on bed rest for about 2 to 4 hours. You may need to stay a little longer if you need special care.
- When your health care team feels you are ready to go home, they remove your IV. They give you written instructions for how to care for yourself at home.
- You cannot drive yourself home after your biopsy. Have your family member or friend drive you home. For your safety, don't use public transit to get home.



## What should I do when I get home?

- Relax for the rest of the day.
- Keep the bandage over your puncture site dry on the first day. You can shower the next day.
- For the next 24 hours:**
  - Don't drink alcohol or take medicines that make you drowsy (like sedatives or tranquilizers).
  - Don't drive a car or use any heavy machines.
  - Don't make any legal or financial decisions. Don't sign any papers.
- Don't lift anything over 10 pounds (5 kilograms) for 48 hours.
- Don't travel on a plane for at least 7 days after your biopsy.

- ☑ **Talk to your doctor before you take any medicines that could increase your risk of bleeding.** These are listed on page 2 of this booklet.
- ☑ Talk to your doctor before you take Vitamin E.

Some people may feel pain in their right shoulder or under their ribs after their biopsy. This may last for a few days.

## What problems should I look out for?



**Call your doctor or go to the nearest emergency department if:**

- your pulse starts to beat very quickly
- your pain gets worse
- you feel faint
- you begin to sweat a lot
- your biopsy area swells up, becomes red, or pus (a thick yellow liquid) begins to come out
- you have a fever over 37.5° C or 99.5° F

## If you had a lung biopsy



**Call your doctor or go to the nearest emergency department if:**

- suddenly begin to breathe quickly
- have pain in your chest or upper back
- find it hard to breathe
- begin to sweat a lot
- you notice your skin changing colour
- become anxious (worried or stressed)



**Don't smoke after a lung biopsy.**

## If you had a kidney biopsy

You may have some blood in your urine (pee) for 3 to 5 days after your biopsy. The bleeding should decrease over this time.



**Call your doctor or go to the nearest emergency department if the bleeding increases or lasts longer than 1 week.**



Call your doctor for a follow-up appointment to talk about your biopsy results. Biopsy results are usually ready in 7 to 10 days.

## **Who should I call if I have any questions?**

If you have any question or concerns about your biopsy, please call the **Clinical Nurse Coordinator:**

### **Toronto General Hospital**

 Phone: 416 340 4800, extension 5403

### **Toronto Western Hospital**

 Phone: 416 603 5800, extension 6301

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

**You can also call the doctor who scheduled you for the biopsy.**