

Biopsy

A biopsy is the removal of pieces of tissue, which are then sent to a lab for testing. A biopsy is most often used to find cancer. Any part of the body, such as the skin, an organ or a lump can be tested. An x-ray, CT scan or ultrasound may be done to locate the biopsy site. A biopsy may be done during surgery. Your doctor will review the results of your biopsy with you at your next visit and talk to you about treatment if needed.

If you have any allergies to medicines, foods or other things, tell the staff before the test.

If you are pregnant or think you might be, tell the staff before the test.

Arrive on time for your test. You may be told to arrive 30 minutes before your appointment time. A simple biopsy takes about 15 minutes. It may take longer if several biopsies or x-rays are needed.

To Prepare

- Do not take aspirin or ibuprofen for one week before the biopsy.
- Check with your doctor about taking your prescription medicines.

During the Test

- You will lie on a table and may wear a hospital gown.
- An x-ray, CT scan or ultrasound may be done to locate the biopsy site.
- The site is cleaned.
- Numbing medicine is put into the skin. This may sting.
- When the site is numb, a small needle is put into the area to be tested. Tissues and cells are removed. In some cases a small incision is made so that tissue or a lump can be removed and tested.
- If you feel any discomfort, tell the doctor.
- The needle is then removed.
- Pressure is applied, then a small bandage. If an incision was made, stitches may be placed to close the incision.

After the Test

- You may have bruising, discomfort or swelling at the biopsy site.
- If needed, use over the counter pain medicine that does not contain aspirin.
- Apply an ice pack to the site as needed to reduce swelling and bruising. Do not apply ice directly to the skin. Apply ice for 20 minutes and then take the ice off for at least 30 minutes.
- Avoid strenuous activity and lifting over 5 pounds for 24 hours. You may resume normal activities unless otherwise instructed.
- Test results are sent to your doctor. Your doctor will share the results with you.

Call your doctor if you have:

- Bleeding, drainage, increased swelling, redness or warmth at the site
- Pain not relieved by over the counter pain medicine

Talk to the staff if you have any questions or concerns.