

## Contact details

If you have any further questions please contact your Clinical Nurse Specialist:

**Grantham Hospital**  
Kate Taft Working days: I work four days a week, Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 5.00pm (the voicemail will state my day off)  
Telephone: 01476 464503  
Bleep: Via Hospital Switchboard 01476 565232 ask for Bleep 513

**Lincoln County Hospital**  
Tracie Charlton and Sarah Civello (Monday to Friday 8.00am to 4.00pm (excluding bank holidays)  
Telephone: 01522 573041  
Bleep: (For urgent queries) 01522 512512 ask operator for bleep 5520/2197  
Email: [ulh.MacmillanLungCNS@nhs.net](mailto:ulh.MacmillanLungCNS@nhs.net)  
(for use where confidential information is being discussed)

**Pilgrim Hospital**  
Gill Woods and Dawn Skinner Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm (excluding bank holidays)  
Telephone: 01205 446294  
Bleep: Via Hospital Switchboard 01205 364801 ask for Bleep 440

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# Having a CT guided Lung Biopsy

Respiratory Departments

[www.ulh.nhs.uk](http://www.ulh.nhs.uk)

Day: .....

Date: .....

Time of arrival at unit: .....

Fasting from: .....

Approximate time of procedure: .....

A doctor will speak to you before and after the procedure.

**You must be accompanied by someone who can drive you home after the procedure.**

**You must not drive nor operate machinery for 24 hours following this examination.**

Your doctor has advised you that you need a test called a LUNG BIOPSY. This leaflet answers some of the most frequently asked questions.

## When will I get the results?

It can take up to a week for the results to come back to the doctor who asked for the test. You should have been given an appointment to see the doctor again. If you have not heard from the hospital within 7 days of the biopsy you should telephone the consultant's secretary to make another appointment.

### Grantham Hospital

Respiratory consultant's secretary                      01476 464441

### Pilgrim Hospital

Dr Asuquo's secretary    01205 446631  
Dr Buls' secretary    01205 446406

### Lincoln County Hospital

Dr Matusiewicz's secretary                                      01522 707297  
Dr Scheele's secretary    01522 573226  
Dr Pogson's and Dr Soden's secretary                      01522 573417

## **Will there be any side effects after the biopsy?**

Most people have no problems. If you suddenly become short of breath or have severe chest pain, this may mean that there has been an air leak (a pneumothorax). You should attend the Accident & Emergency department at the hospital straight away and arrange to be seen and have another chest x-ray.

## **Can I drive after the biopsy?**

Someone else must drive you home after the test. You should be able to drive again the next day if you feel well.

## **Are there any problems associated with flying in an aircraft after the biopsy?**

You should normally not fly for 6 weeks. If you wish to fly in less than 6 weeks please discuss this with your hospital doctor.

## **When can I go back to work?**

You should be able to go back to work the day after the lung biopsy unless advised otherwise.

## **Aim of the leaflet**

The aim of this leaflet is to provide further information and advice about having a CT guided lung biopsy.

## **What is a lung biopsy?**

A lung biopsy is a way of getting a sample of tissue from the lungs using a small needle. It helps us to find out what is wrong.

## **Why do I need a lung biopsy?**

Your chest x-ray, or your CT scan, has shown an area either on the surface of the lung (the pleura), or within the lung that does not look normal. There are many causes for this problem and your doctor thinks that it is important to know what is causing the problem. This type of test gives us an answer in about 8 out of 10 people that we do it on.

## **Are there any alternatives to lung biopsy?**

In some patients, we can reach the area with a bronchoscopy, a small bendy plastic tube that we pass through the nose or mouth into the breathing tubes. The success rate for a problem towards the edge of the lung is about 3 out of 10.

Another alternative would be to have a surgical biopsy under a general anaesthetic at a hospital in Nottingham. This has a success rate of nearly 10 out of 10.

## **Will I need a general anaesthetic?**

No. A lung biopsy is done under local anaesthetic – a small injection is used to numb the skin.

## What happens now?

You will receive a letter or phone call telling you when and where to report. The biopsy will normally be done within 2 weeks.

## Can I eat and drink before the test?

You may eat a light breakfast before the test – some tea and toast for example.

## Do I take my tablets on the day of the test?

Yes, generally. The doctor you saw in the clinic will have checked your medicines with you. If you take medicines that thin your blood you should have been advised to stop taking these. You will have been given specific instructions on when to stop these. If you are unsure please contact your nurse specialist, their contact details are on page 8 of this booklet.

## What happens next?

The doctor who performs the test is an x-ray specialist called a radiologist. A CT scanner, or an ultrasound machine, is used to let the doctor know exactly where to take the sample from. The doctor then gives a local anaesthetic and passes a small needle into the relevant area in the lung and takes some tiny samples of tissue. The samples are then sent to the laboratory and are examined under the microscope by a specialist called a pathologist.

## Will it hurt me?

It shouldn't be painful at the time, but some people find it uncomfortable. Some people have a bit of pain afterwards, once the anaesthetic has worn off. If you have any pain you can take a painkiller like paracetamol (up to 2 tablets, 4 times a day).

## How long does it take?

It is usually a quick procedure, but may take up to 45 minutes.

## Can I go home after the procedure?

Most people are able to go home after a few hours but there must be someone to stay with you overnight. Please bring an overnight bag with you in case you do need to stay overnight in hospital.

## What are the risks of having a lung biopsy?

It is quite common for a little air to escape into the space around the lung during the biopsy. This may cause the lung to partially collapse. We call this a pneumothorax. Recent research shows this may happen in around 1 in 5 of procedures. Usually a pneumothorax is small and does not cause problems. Rarely (in up to 5 out of 100 procedures) a lot of air leaks out and causes a big pneumothorax. If that were to happen then we would treat it by either sucking the air out again with a needle (this is called aspiration) or by putting in a tube to let the air out (the tube is called a chest drain). If this happened you would probably have to stay in hospital for a day or two.

It is quite normal to cough up some streaks of blood at the time or for a day or two after the procedure. Very rarely a more significant bleed can occur, in which case you should attend the Accident & Emergency department at the hospital. Rarely, this procedure has been known to cause death (risk 1:1,000). The risk will be lower if you are otherwise healthy and higher if your general health is poor.