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Percutaneous Liver Biopsy

What is a Liver Biopsy?

This procedure involves inserting a small needle into the liver through the skin and taking a sample of tissue from your liver to determine if there is any damage or disease present.

Why do I need this procedure?

Your Doctor has asked for this procedure to be performed because you may experience some or all of the following;

- Abnormal blood tests,
- Estimate the degree of liver disease/damage,
- Help determine the best treatment for liver disease/damage.

What should I expect?

The procedure can take between 15-30mins.

It is not uncommon for people to experience right shoulder tip pain immediately after the procedure – this is relieved by oral analgesia.

You may be required to take some time off work – please let the nurses know so they can organise a medical certificate for you. An attendance certificate can be provided for your carer.

Please make sure you have someone to pick you up after your procedure. Your procedure will be cancelled if you don't have an escort. Please contact MIVIR as soon as possible if this cannot be arranged.

On the day of your procedure

You will need to present to the Day Procedure Unit on the day of your biopsy – your admission time will be sent to you with your appointment time. This will allow the nurses time to complete your admission paperwork and any other tests that may be required such as blood tests or pre-medication.

You will be required to fast for 4 hours before your procedure – this means no food or fluids. You may take any regular medication with a small sip of water. Please continue to take your blood pressure medication. Please bring a list of your medications with you.

Please contact MIVIR if you are taking medication for the following;

- Diabetes,
- Stroke,
- Heart Conditions such as a Heart Attack or Atrial Fibrillation.

Pre Procedure

You will be required to change into a hospital gown; you need to remove your bra but may leave your underwear on. A cannula will be inserted into one of the veins in your arm or hand so medication can be given before, during or after your procedure.

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Procedure

You will be taken into the ultrasound room and positioned on the table. Monitoring equipment will be attached so the nurses can monitor your heart rate and oxygen saturations throughout the procedure. An ultrasound machine will be used to see the liver and determine the best approach. A cold antiseptic solution will clean the skin around the area for biopsy. You will be covered with a sterile drape. Local anaesthetic will be injected into the skin and down to the liver capsule, which will sting for 15-20 seconds. You should only feel pushing and pressure after this. Some people experience a sharp flicking sensation when the sample is taken. More than one sample may be required.

Post Procedure

Once the procedure is finished a small waterproof dressing is applied to the puncture site. You will be required to lie flat for a 4 hours after the procedure. During your time in the recovery room the nurses will monitor your blood pressure and heart rate and regularly check the puncture site for any signs of bleeding. Medication to relieve any pain or discomfort will be prescribed. You will be given something to eat and drink as soon as you are able to sit up. Your cannula will be removed just before you leave the hospital. If you are staying overnight in the hospital, you will be taken to the ward after a short period in recovery.

Discharge

If you are being discharged home, your recovery period is approximately 4 hours. You must have someone to collect you and stay with you overnight. You will be given a letter from the nurses with some discharge instructions and any other relevant information related to your procedure. You may be required make a follow-up appointment with Dr Vrazas. This can be made at your convenience by phoning MIVIR on 9411 7165.

At Home

We recommend the following;

- Rest quietly for the next 24-48 hours.
- No strenuous activity for the next 24-48 hours.
- Avoid activities where repetitive bending is required.
- You may remove the dressing the following day – you can leave it uncovered.
- Avoid swimming, spa's and baths for 7 days.
- If you notice any of the following, call an ambulance or present to your nearest Emergency Department.
 - Swelling, bruising or pain at the biopsy site that continues to increase in size.
 - Difficulty breathing, dizziness, fever or nausea and vomiting.

Useful Links

[Image Guided Liver Biopsy – Inside Radiology](#)