

We Love Your Liver!

Liver biopsy is frequently the most effective way to determine if treatment is needed to prevent liver damage from occurring. If your doctor has determined a liver biopsy is in your best interest, this is what you can expect:

Pre-Procedure

The liver is a vascular organ and we take every precaution to ensure your safety. If you are on any kind of blood thinners, **you must stop medications 5 days prior to biopsy**. These medications include: Aspirin, Coumadin, Plavix, Vitamin E-containing products, and any products containing ibuprofen (i.e., Motrin, Aleve, Advil, Excedrin, etc.). Your doctor will order blood tests to be sure it is safe to proceed with the biopsy.

You may have a liquid diet the morning of the biopsy. If you are a diabetic, please take all medications as usual and monitor your blood sugars. If need be, you may have apple juice to prevent a hypoglycemic reaction. If you are on any type of daily medications such as blood pressure medications, diuretics, etc., please take your medications as usual.

You should plan to have someone drive you to and from your appointment and stay with you for 24 hours after your biopsy.

During Your Biopsy

Ultrasound imaging will be used to ensure that the biopsy needle is safely placed. Sedative medications to help you relax can be given. A local anesthesia will be given to prevent any pain during the biopsy. You should not feel any pain during the biopsy. A biopsy needle is then inserted into the liver and a tissue sample is taken. This may be done several times until the doctor feels that adequate samples for a conclusive diagnosis have been taken. Those samples are then sent off to a pathologist and the results are sent to your referring doctor. Results take from 2-7 days to be processed.

Post-Procedure

You will be monitored for 2 hours after your procedure. We ask that you lie on your right side. This helps put pressure on the vessels on the liver so that bleeding is minimized. We also monitor blood pressure, heart rate, and respiratory rate to detect for any signs of internal bleeding. Significant bleeding is extremely rare, but small amounts of blood may irritate the area and cause shoulder pain for about 20 minutes. If this is bothersome to you, you will be given pain medication.

After your 2 hours of being monitored, you are given discharge instructions by your nurse and are free to go home. We recommend that you do not exert yourself for the first 24 hours post-procedure, and watch for any weakness, rapid pulse, or difficulties with alertness.

Hope to see you soon!