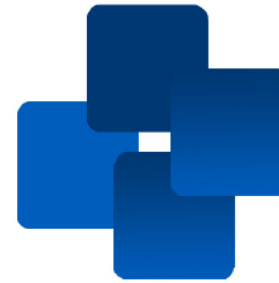
East and North Hertfordshire
NHS Trust

Patient Information

A Kidney Biopsy

Renal Department



Introduction

This leaflet is intended to provide you with information regarding a kidney biopsy (sometimes called renal biopsy).

What is a kidney biopsy?

A kidney biopsy is a medical procedure that involves taking a small sample of kidney tissue using a special hollow needle, so that it can be examined under a microscope.

Kidney biopsies are usually straightforward procedures. A biopsy is undertaken as a day case but may involve an overnight stay in hospital.

Why are biopsies performed?

It is not always possible to tell exactly what is going on in a kidney from blood test results, ultrasound images or X-rays. Looking at a small sample of kidney tissue under a microscope can help the doctors discover exactly what the problem is with your kidneys and help them decide the most appropriate treatment.

What do I need to bring with me on the day of the procedure?

You will need to wear comfortable clothes and bring your usual medication, nightwear and toiletries with you into hospital in case of an overnight stay.

Please do not wear any make-up, nail varnish or jewellery.

Preparation for the procedure

The biopsy procedure is usually performed in the treatment room on ward 6B, and you will be given an appointment time to attend RITA (Renal Intervention Treatment Area) on Level 6.

- We may advise you to stop taking any medicines that affect blood clotting, such as aspirin or warfarin, for one week before your biopsy. You may need to discuss your medication with your doctor if you take medicines for other conditions.
- If you are prescribed high blood pressure medication it is important to take it as usual. Your procedure may be cancelled if your blood pressure is too high.
- Usually you may eat a light breakfast unless advised otherwise, then only drink clear fluids up to two hours before your appointment time, i.e. water.
- A blood test is normally taken before the biopsy to check how well your blood clots. This is to identify a possible risk of bleeding following the biopsy.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form before the biopsy to say that you understand the procedure and you understand that there may be a small risk involved.
- We will provide a gown for you to wear.

How is the biopsy done?

Your kidneys lie just below your ribcage, towards the side and back of your abdomen. This means in order to reach the kidney you will be asked to lie on your front on a bed. The skin over the kidney to be biopsied will be cleaned with antiseptic, then a local anaesthetic will be used to numb the area. This can sting at first but makes the skin numb so that you will not be able to feel any pain or discomfort. The surface of the kidney is also numbed with another needle.

If the biopsy is of a transplanted kidney, you will be asked to lie on your back and the local anaesthetic will be injected into the skin over the transplant area.

The doctor will use an ultrasound scanner, which locates the kidney, to make sure the needle is inserted at exactly the right place. The scan is painless.

You will be asked to hold your breath for 5-10 seconds while the needle is pushed in and out. This is because the kidneys move slightly when you breathe in and out.

What are the risks of having a kidney biopsy?

Complications are rare. In a small number of cases there is some bleeding from the biopsy site. This is usually minor and soon stops. You may notice a small amount of blood in your urine after the procedure. This is quite common, but always seek the advice of the ward staff if you are concerned.

- There is a 3% risk of heavily blood stained urine.

When tissue is taken from an important organ, such as your kidneys, you will need to stay in hospital for at least six hours after the procedure. This is so that you can rest and hospital staff can ensure that there is no internal bleeding. It is rare for serious bleeding to occur following a biopsy but if it does, you may need to have an operation or a blood transfusion.

- There is a 1 in 500, to 1 in 1000 risk of intervention, either surgery or use of catheter under X-ray control to stop bleeding.

After a kidney biopsy

You will need to lie on a bed for six hours to check that you have no bleeding so you may wish to bring a book or media player for this time.

- Your blood pressure will be frequently monitored and any urine you pass will be checked for blood. You may need to stay in hospital overnight.
- Some patients experience a little discomfort, which is usually eased by simple painkillers such as paracetamol. **You should avoid any non-steroidal painkillers, such as ibuprofen** (the doctor and ward staff can advise you).
- You will need to arrange for a member of your family, carer or a friend to drive you home, and you will need someone to stay at home with you the night following the procedure.
- You should continue to rest flat.
- You are strongly advised not to drive for two days and not to lift any heavy objects or partake in contact or extreme sports for two weeks following your kidney biopsy.

The doctors will advise you when you can return to work and when to restart your medication, including any medicines that affect blood clotting.

A provisional report of the biopsy is often available within 3-4 days, but the full results can take up to a month. The renal team will discuss your results with you, either while you are in hospital or at your next clinic appointment.

What complications might occur?

These are the main complications of the procedure:

- **Bleeding** - bleeding at the biopsy site is rare. Any bleeding that does occur usually stops on its own, but occasionally requires further treatment.
- **Infection** - although very rare, an infection following the procedure may require further treatment.
- **Pain** - this is usually mild and manageable.
- **Damage to the kidney -** this is very rare and the use of ultrasound guidance minimises this risk.

Important - Please contact RITA on 01438 284775 between the hours of 9am to 4pm, or Ward 6B on 01438 285063 at any other time, if you experience any of the following:

- Your urine appears blood stained.
- The site of the biopsy is red, angry looking or swollen.
- You develop a high temperature or fever.
- The biopsy site is still painful three days after your procedure and painkillers do not help.
- You have any other concerns regarding the biopsy.

What if I have any questions?

If you have any concerns or questions, please speak to a member of the nursing team.

Please use this space to write down any questions you wish to ask:

Contact details

RITA (Renal Intervention Treatment Area)
Level 6, Lister Hospital ☎ **01438 284775**
Monday to Friday, 9am - 4pm

Ward 6B (Nephrology Ward) ☎ **01438 285063**
Renal enquiries outside above times

Further information

Patient information website:
http://www.patient.co.uk/health/Biopsy-Kidney.htm

www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk

You can request this information in a different format or another language.

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