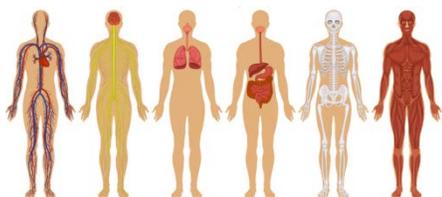


Biopsy

Your doctor may suggest you have a biopsy if you have certain signs or symptoms, or if your doctor has identified an area of concern.

A biopsy is a procedure that removes a small piece of tissue, or a sample of cells, from a part of your body.

Any part of the body, such as bone marrow, a lump, an organ or skin, can be tested with a biopsy.



The part of the body that is biopsied is not damaged by the biopsy.

The body heals quickly from this kind of procedure because the amount of tissue that is taken is so small.



The sample is sent to a lab and examined closely under a microscope to check if cancer or another problem is present.

A biopsy is a test that can tell for sure if a suspicious area is cancer. Biopsies are also done to identify causes of other medical problems such as an infection or an unusual swelling.

There are different ways to do a biopsy.



Some kinds of biopsies require surgery. Other kinds of biopsies remove tissue with a needle.

Some biopsies can be done at the doctor's office. Others may be done at the hospital.



Your doctor will explain the kind of biopsy you will have. Be sure to ask questions about anything you don't understand.

Like any procedure, there may be some risks and complications with a biopsy. Your doctor will discuss the possible risks and complications with you.

It can be a comfort to have a friend or family member with you at your biopsy appointment. For some biopsies, such as those requiring anesthesia, you will be asked to have someone with you to provide transportation.

Biopsy procedures separate the tissue being tested from the tissue around the area. This prevents contact of abnormal cells with normal ones. A biopsy *does not* risk spreading cancer. It does not cause cancer cells to spread or grow.

Depending on the kind of biopsy you have, you may not need to do anything to prepare. On the other hand, you may be told to not eat food before the test, to arrange for a ride home after the test, to adjust your usual medicines, etc.

You will receive medicine to control pain during the biopsy. This may be a local anesthetic (an injection to numb the area around the biopsy site). Or, you may have an IV to provide pain medicine and a sedative (to help you relax).

An X-ray, CT scan or ultrasound may be done to help your doctor precisely locate the biopsy site.



After the test, you may have bruising, discomfort or swelling at the biopsy site. These problems should not last long.

Your doctor will talk to you about ways to care for yourself after biopsy and will prescribe pain medication if needed.



Biopsy samples need time to be analyzed. Your doctor will tell you how long it will take to get your biopsy results.

Biopsy results help guide treatment choices. For example, if cancer is detected, the biopsy results can tell the exact type. This allows you and your doctor to work together to develop the best treatment plan for you. Or, a biopsy may identify a specific type of infection so your doctor can choose the most effective medicine.

Ask your doctor or nurse if you have any questions about your biopsy.

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