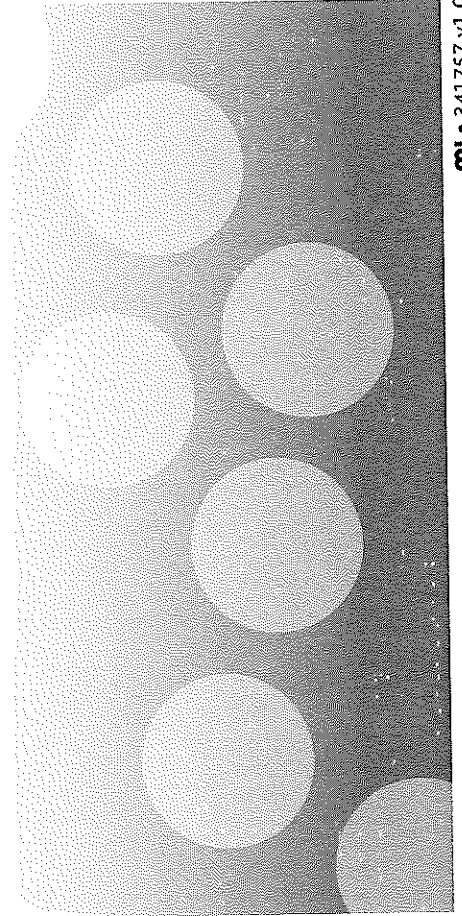
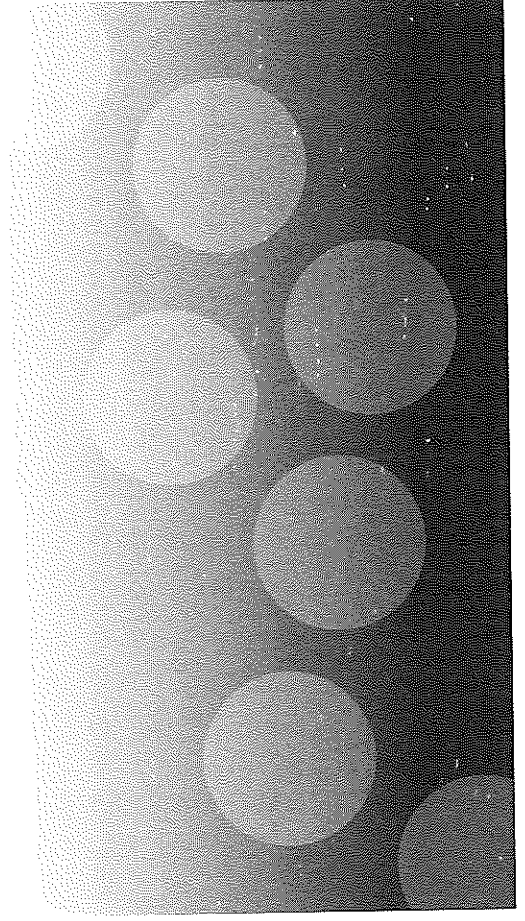


Information about having

Ultrasound Guided Core Biopsy or Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA) Biopsy of the Neck



Why do I need an ultrasound guided core biopsy or fine needle aspiration (FNA) biopsy of the neck?

The results of the examination by the doctor, or the results of other imaging tests show that you may have a lump or abnormality in your neck. The doctors looking after you are unsure of the nature of this abnormality or lump.

In some instances, the ultrasound assessment alone can determine this (and biopsy is not always required). However, in other cases an ultrasound guided core biopsy or FNA biopsy can help tell the nature of the abnormality and guide your doctors on any treatment you may require. During the procedure we take some tissue samples that we send to the pathology laboratory for examination under a microscope.

What is an ultrasound guided core biopsy or FNA biopsy of the neck?


An ultrasound guided core biopsy is a procedure which involves removing a small sample of tissue from the lump in your neck. We use a special biopsy needle to take the sample and use an ultrasound scan to guide the needle to the correct location.

A FNA biopsy uses a smaller needle.

These are relatively less painful and quicker methods when compared to a surgical biopsy. The Radiologist or Radiographer will decide if you need a core or FNA biopsy.

Who will do it?

A specially trained doctor called a Radiologist or a specially trained Radiographer.

Please contact your GP or NHS 24 on  111 out of hours if you have any of the following after your procedure

- The skin around your biopsy site becomes red and inflamed.
- You have a swelling in your neck.
- You have pain that is not relieved with simple painkillers such as paracetamol.

If you experience new difficulties in swallowing or breathing after the procedure, go to your nearest Accident and Emergency Department.

When will I get the results?

You will have a follow up appointment with the doctor who referred you for the procedure. The results of your neck biopsy will usually be available in 1-2 weeks and your doctor will see you in clinic to inform you of the results.

If you do not have a follow up appointment arranged, please contact your Consultant's secretary.

What should I do to prepare for the procedure?

- Unless we have told you otherwise, continue to take your regular medication as usual. Please ensure you let the department know if you are on any medications that thin your blood, such as Clopidogrel, Warfarin, Apixaban, Dabigatran, Rivaroxaban, or Enoxaparin. You may need to stop these medications for a few days before the procedure - please ring the Radiology Department as soon as you receive your appointment letter for advice on this.
- You can eat and drink as normal before the procedure.
- It is helpful to wear loose clothing without a high collar or polo neck. Please remove any necklaces and large earrings before the procedure.

What happens during the procedure?

- The Radiologist or Radiographer will explain the procedure to you. You will be able to ask any further questions.
- We will ask you lie back on the couch.
- We will apply some gel to the skin on your neck and use the ultrasound scan to confirm the presence and location of the lump.
- The staff will clean the skin with antiseptic solution and place a sterile towel over the area.
- Depending on the procedure, we may inject local anaesthetic into the skin.
- For a core biopsy, we always use local anaesthetic to numb the area. A small skin cut is often made to allow the larger biopsy needle to pass. This cut is small enough that you will not need any stitches, occasionally we may need to apply paper stitches. We use the ultrasound scan to direct the needle. We may need to take more than one sample.

- For a FNA biopsy, we move a smaller needle backwards and forwards within the neck lump, under ultrasound guidance. Usually there are several passes with the needle.
- We will apply a small dressing over the biopsy site.

How long will it take?

This can vary for a number of reasons however the whole procedure normally takes approximately 20-30 minutes.

What are the benefits?

Having the core biopsy or FNA biopsy may mean that you don't need surgery to find out about the lump.

Ultrasound has no known harmful effects.

What are the risks?

- There is a small risk of localised bleeding or bruising but if this happens it quickly settles.
- There is a very small risk of infection. We reduce this risk by the use of sterile equipment including a sterile cover over the ultrasound probe.
- There is a very slight risk to nearby structures in the neck. This is reduced by the use of the ultrasound to direct biopsy needle placement and position.
- A FNA biopsy samples a small number of cells from a mass or lump. This means that there is a possibility that there is not enough information for the pathology department to provide a definitive result. This may mean that a repeat sample needs to be taken, but this is not because the original procedure was done incorrectly.

We will not know if a second sample is required until the pathology tests are available; your doctor will discuss this with you in clinic if it becomes necessary. A second sample is much less likely to be required after a core biopsy.

Will I feel pain?

If we give you a local anaesthetic, this causes minor stinging for a few seconds after which the area will be numb.

You may feel a minor discomfort during the biopsy.

After your procedure

- You will be able to leave the department immediately after the procedure.
- You can eat, drink and drive as normal after the procedure.
- We generally advise you to avoid any vigorous physical activity for 24 hours after the procedure.
- If you have had a biopsy, we would advise you to keep the biopsy site dry with the dressing on for 24-48 hours.
- You may return to work on the same day or the day after the procedure.
- You can also shower and bath as normal after the procedure.

Ongoing Care

When the local anaesthetic wears off you may have a dull discomfort at the biopsy site. You can take painkillers such as paracetamol to help the pain (do not take more than the maximum dose). You should not use aspirin to relieve pain as it may worsen any bruising.