

Radiology Department

Transjugular Liver Biopsy

Information for patients



What is a Transjugular Liver Biopsy?

A liver biopsy involves taking a small sample of tissue from the liver. Liver cells can then be looked at in detail. It is used to diagnose and monitor certain liver conditions.

The procedure is carried out by a specialist Radiology doctor in the X-ray department, using X-ray guidance. Contrast media (a special dye which shows up on X-ray) is injected into the jugular vein in the neck. This allows the doctor to guide the biopsy needle to the liver so that a small tissue sample can be taken for analysis.

Usually a liver biopsy is performed by going through the skin on the right side of the chest, but in your case the doctors feel it is safer to do it this way.

What happens before the procedure?

You will need to change into a hospital gown. Your nurse will put a cannula into a vein in your arm in case you need medications during the procedure. You will have blood tests to make sure that your blood is clotting properly.

You will not be allowed to have anything to eat or drink for 4 hours before the procedure.

What happens during the procedure?

You will be asked to lie down on the X-ray table and nursing staff will attach monitoring equipment to you. The right side of your neck will be cleaned with some antiseptic and local anaesthetic will be placed under the skin. This stings a little at first and then the area will go numb.

The radiologist will then place a catheter (a hollow, narrow tube) into the vein and through that tube they will place a biopsy needle. Using X-rays for guidance they will direct the needle to the liver and then remove a small sample of liver tissue.

Sometimes the radiologist will repeat this to make sure they get a good sample. Once they are happy they have a good amount of tissue they will remove the tubes and press on your neck for a few minutes to stop any bleeding. You will then be taken back to the ward where the nurses will continue to monitor you for signs for bleeding.

What is the risk of complications?

Complications are infrequent. The main ones include:

- bleeding from the point where the biopsy was taken
- infection.

How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns or need any further information you may telephone the number on your appointment letter.

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@orh.nhs.uk**

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