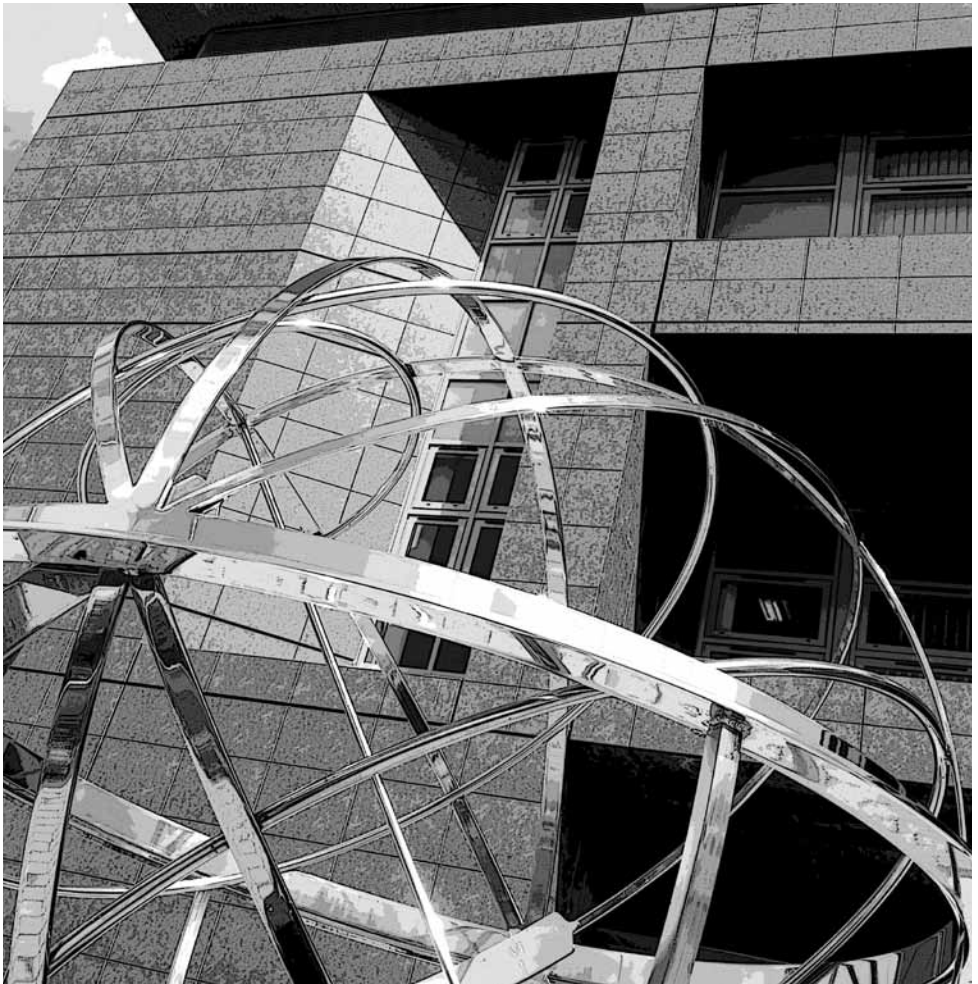


# Ultrasound guided biopsy of the neck

Information for patients





## What is an ultrasound guided biopsy of the neck?

A neck biopsy is a procedure to take a tissue sample of your neck lump. This can be carried out anywhere in the neck, including from a lump within the thyroid gland.

The ultrasound scanner uses high frequency sound waves which reflect back off solid body parts to make an image of your neck on the screen. The image is then used to guide a needle to the right place in your neck and collect small pieces of tissue. The sample or 'biopsy' is sent to the laboratory to be analysed.

## What are the benefits?

The results of examinations by the doctor, or the results of other tests that you have had (such as blood tests or imaging tests), show that you may have an abnormality in your neck.

The doctors looking after you are unsure of what is exactly causing this abnormality or lump. They have recommended that you have a neck biopsy to help them to find out what it might be and why it is there. This will help them to decide on the most suitable treatment for you.

Having the biopsy may mean you won't have to have a surgical procedure to find out about the lump.

## What are the risks?

Neck biopsy is considered a safe procedure. It very rarely causes any complications. Occasionally you may develop a bruise or rarely a haematoma (a larger collection of blood under your skin).

The doctor performing the biopsy will discuss the specific risks with you before asking your permission to perform the biopsy.

## Are there different types of biopsy?

Yes. The Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA) and the Core Biopsy.

In FNA, as the name suggests, we use a very fine needle – the same size as the one used when you have your blood taken. With FNA there is usually no need for local anaesthetic (to make the area numb) because giving the local anaesthetic would be more uncomfortable than the FNA itself.

If the FNA is unlikely to give us a complete answer, you may need a Core Biopsy. This decision will be made by the doctors looking after you.

In a Core Biopsy a slightly thicker needle is used so that a larger tissue sample can be taken for examination. If you have a Core Biopsy you will have a local anaesthetic injected into your skin to make it go numb before the biopsy is carried out.

## What should I do to prepare for the procedure?

Unless we have told you otherwise, continue to take your regular medication as usual, with a small amount of water.

## Can I bring a relative or friend?

Yes, but they will usually be asked to wait outside the ultrasound room during the actual procedure.

## What does the procedure involve?

When your biopsy is due to start a member of staff will show you into the scan room where you will meet the doctor.

The doctor will explain the procedure, how it will be performed and the risks involved. The doctor will then ask you to sign the consent form to give your permission for the biopsy to go ahead.

The doctor will also ask if you will allow the biopsy sample to be stored so that it may be used for research. This may benefit other patients in the future; the biopsy will be performed in the same way whether you answer yes or no. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask the doctor.

You will be asked to lie on your back on the ultrasound table with a pillow between your shoulders. The doctor will spread some gel on the skin of your neck and use the ultrasound probe to find the area of concern. When the area has been found the doctor will clean your skin and insert a small needle into the area. If you are having an FNA the needle may be moved up and down within the neck lump in order to collect the sample. The needle is then removed and the sample sent to the laboratory to be analysed.

The biopsy will usually only need to be performed once but if the sample is not enough to make a diagnosis you may need to have a further biopsy taken.

The whole procedure takes approximately 20-30 minutes.

## Does it hurt?

You will only feel a minor scratch or discomfort during the biopsy.

If you are having a Core Biopsy you may feel a small scratch or sting when you are given the local anaesthetic.

## What happens after the procedure?

After the neck biopsy you can go straight home. You can eat and drink as normal. We advise you to avoid vigorous physical activity for 24 hours after the biopsy. Most people are comfortable enough to go back to work the same day or the day after this procedure. We will give you an information sheet to take home with you.

## When do I get the results?

The results of your neck biopsy will usually be available a week later and your doctor will see you in clinic to let you know what they say.

For neck lumps, the biopsy will provide a diagnosis in about 9 out of every 10 patients.

## How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Radiology Department using the number on your appointment letter.

## Further information

More patient information is available on the following websites:

[www.impactscan.org/patientguide.htm](http://www.impactscan.org/patientguide.htm)

[www.ouh.nhs.uk](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk)

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

[www.goingfora.com](http://www.goingfora.com)

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@ouh.nhs.uk**

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