



Ultrasound of the Neck and Ultrasound guided biopsy of the neck

Information for patients

Your doctor has asked for an ultrasound examination of your neck. This will be performed by a specialist in head and neck imaging at the Diagnostic Imaging department at East Surrey hospital. Your doctor may also have requested that a tissue sample (biopsy) should be taken.

If this is the case, the Ultrasound specialist will inform you if this is necessary. This decision will be based on the Ultrasound findings and any relevant clinical history.

We cannot always predict in advance when a tissue sample will be necessary but please be prepared if the doctor decides this is what we need to do.

The tissue samples are taken using Ultrasound guidance. This means the needle is placed in the correct position with the aid of the Ultrasound. This makes the procedure very safe and precise.

There are two main types of tissue sampling.

1. Fine needle biopsy, which is sometimes called FNA. Here a tiny needle is put into the lesion and cells are taken out. These cells are put onto slides and sent to the lab to be looked at.
2. Core biopsy. Here a special needle is used which takes a core of tissue from the lesion. For this procedure we use local anaesthetic. Core biopsies give a more detailed sample but they take longer to perform.

Why do I need a biopsy?

A Biopsy is performed to obtain tissue to make a diagnosis. Using Ultrasound guidance means we can take the sample safely and quickly without using a general anaesthetic or involving a stay in hospital.

Do I need to do anything before my appointment?

No preparation is required.

Do I need to stop any medication?

The doctor will ask if you are taking any blood thinning medicines but usually this won't affect the decision to take a biopsy.

How long will I have to stay after the procedure?

If you have a fine needle biopsy, you will be asked to press on the biopsy site for a few minutes before you can leave the department.

If you have a core biopsy we will keep you under observation in the department for about an hour to make sure there is no bruising. You will be seated in the Radiology Day case unit during this time.

Can things go wrong?

Sometimes you can get bruising after a biopsy. The chance of anything worse happening is very small.

Sometimes the biopsy doesn't give us enough tissue to make the diagnosis and you may be asked to return for a repeat examination.

The specialist will explain in detail any possible complications before you consent to the procedure.

Please think of any questions you may want to ask in advance.

Further information

If you need to cancel, change your appointment or have any concerns/queries about your examination, please contact the Ultrasound department on: 01737 768511 x1611 or x6023 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm).

Directions, parking and travel information for East Surrey Hospital, Crawley and Horsham Hospital is available on our website at:

www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk/finding-us/

Contact Us

Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
Diagnostic Imaging Department
East Surrey Hospital
Redhill Surrey RH1 5RH
Tel: 01737 768511

www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Telephone: 01737 231 958

Email: pals@sash.nhs.uk

Write to: PALS, East Surrey Hospital
Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH

You can also ask a member of staff to contact PALS on your behalf.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats, including in larger text. Contact: 01737 231 958 for help.

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