



For more information please visit us online at: <http://www.osmh.on.ca/diagnostics/>

**If you or your support person do not clearly understand the procedure, please ask for clarification**



## LIVER BIOPSY

### What is it?

The purpose of a liver biopsy is to diagnose and monitor liver diseases. The biopsy is performed using local anesthetic. A small sample of tissue from the liver is collected using a needle inserted through the skin and into the liver. Results from a liver biopsy can help your doctor determine the cause and severity of liver disease and can guide treatment decisions.

### Why do I need it?

Your doctor or healthcare provider may order a liver biopsy in order to<sup>1</sup>:

- Determine the cause of jaundice
- Classify some liver diseases or infections
- Determine the cause of abnormal blood test results
- Check a liver mass found on an X-ray, ultrasound, MRI, or CT scan
- Check the response to treatment for liver disease
- Monitor the function of a transplanted liver



## HOW IS THE PROCEDURE PERFORMED?

### Before

For specific questions regarding the clinical need for this procedure, please contact your ordering provider.

#### Patient Preparation:

You should wear loose-fitting clothing that is easy to change out of. **You will need to arrange for someone to drive you home after you have recovered from the procedure.** One support person (spouse, friend, caregiver, family member) may accompany you on the day of your appointment, but not into the procedure room.

Please bring a list of the medications you are currently taking and a list of any drug/medication allergies you may have.

You can eat and drink normally before the procedure. You may take your usual medications prior to the procedure. See next page if you take blood thinners.

Please phone the Diagnostic Imaging booking line at **705-325-2201 ext. 3505** for cancellations or rebooking if you are unable to attend your appointment.

#### Bloodwork:

Your doctor or healthcare provider will order bloodwork and it must be completed **within 1 week before** your scheduled procedure to ensure we receive your results before your appointment. Unavailable bloodwork results may cause a delay or rebooking of your procedure.



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### Before (Continued)

#### Medication:

Your doctor or healthcare provider will also ask you to stop any blood thinners you take (also known as anticoagulation or antiplatelet medications). Talk to your doctor or healthcare provider about which medications need to be stopped prior to the procedure, for how long, and when you can safely start them again.

The following medications must be stopped prior to the procedure as per the listed times. Discuss this with your doctor or healthcare provider if you have concerns about stopping any of the below medications:

Medication		Number of Days to Hold
Enoxaparin	(Lovenox)	Withhold 1 dose before procedure
Dalteparin	(Fragmin)	Withhold 1 dose before procedure
Apixaban	(Eliquis)	Withhold 3 days before procedure
Rivaroxaban	(Xarelto)	Withhold 3 days before procedure
Dabigatran	(Pradaxa)	Withhold 4 days before procedure
Warfarin*	(Coumadin)	Withhold 5 days before procedure until target INR $\leq 1.8$
Clopidogrel	(Plavix)	Withhold 5 days before procedure
ASA	(Aspirin™)	Withhold 5 days before procedure

\*Patients on **Warfarin (Coumadin)** require a new INR drawn 1 day before the procedure.

### Coming To The Hospital

You must first sign-in with **Centralized Patient Scheduling & Registration (CPSR)**, which is located immediately to your left when you enter the hospital from the main entrance (off Dunlop Street, across from the gift shop). You will receive a patient wristband and be directed to the **Day Surgery department**. Day Surgery will prepare you for the procedure and bring you down to the **Diagnostic Imaging department** at your scheduled appointment time.

**Please bring to the hospital your OHIP card and a list of current medications you are taking.**

You may also bring a book, water, phone/tablet with earphones, and a snack in a small bag for when you are recovering from the procedure.

### During

Biopsies are done in the Interventional Radiology, CT, or Ultrasound Department of Diagnostic Imaging.

**The duration of your appointment time will vary from 30 minutes – 1 hour.**

**You will recover in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) for another 2 – 4 hours.**

1. You will be asked to remove your clothing from above the waist and put on a hospital gown.
2. A Medical Radiation and Imaging Technologist (MRIT) will explain the procedure and answer any questions you have before the biopsy.
3. You will lie on your back on a table or stretcher and will be awake for the procedure.
4. This is an aseptic procedure; your abdomen will be cleaned using a hospital-approved cleansing agent, and sterile drapes applied.
5. To assist with your comfort, a radiologist will inject a numbing agent, called Lidocaine, at the biopsy site. This freezes the area of the biopsy. This should be the only pain or discomfort felt during the procedure.
6. The radiologist will use ultrasound to guide the biopsy needle. 2 - 3 samples are usually taken.
7. A dressing / bandage is applied once the biopsy is completed.



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## WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER



### Recovery & Going Home

You will be sent to the **Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)** to recover from the biopsy. Before being discharged, bloodwork will be taken to determine if you have met recovery standards.

You may have some pain at the biopsy site. You may also have pain in your shoulder. This is called **referred pain**. It is caused by pain travelling along a nerve near the biopsy site. The referred pain usually lasts less than 12 hours<sup>2</sup>. You may have a small amount of bleeding from the procedure site.

For these reasons **you will need someone to drive you home after the procedure**. Don't drive for the next 24 hours or while you're taking strong pain medicine<sup>2</sup>. If you were given medication to help you relax or manage pain during the procedure, then you cannot drive for the next 24 hours.



### Diet & Activity

- Spend the remainder of the day resting, and take it easy for the next 1 – 3 days after the biopsy<sup>2</sup>.
- Have an adult family member, caregiver or friend spend the night following your procedure in the event you may need assistance.
- Resume a normal diet. If your stomach is upset, try bland, low-fat foods, for example: plain rice, broiled chicken, toast, and yogurt<sup>1</sup>.
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated<sup>1</sup>.
- You may resume light activities after 24 hours.
- Avoid lifting anything heavier than 4.5 kilograms (10 pounds) for 3 days<sup>1</sup>.
- Do not participate in sports or strenuous activity for 3 days following your biopsy<sup>1</sup>.



### Wound Care

- It is normal to feel soreness in the area of the biopsy for 2 – 3 days.
- Keep a dressing / bandage over the biopsy site for the first day.
- After 24 hours you should change the dressing / bandage<sup>1</sup>. You may replace it with a Band-Aid that is big enough to cover the puncture site from the biopsy needle.
- It is important to keep the biopsy site clean and dry.



### Bathing<sup>1</sup>

- You may shower 24 - 48 hours after the biopsy, if your doctor or healthcare provider says it is okay. Pat the incision dry.
- **Do not** put creams, lotions, or ointments on the biopsy site.
- **Do not** take a bath, swim, or use a hot tub until the biopsy site is fully healed (no longer has a scab).



### Medication<sup>1</sup>

- **If your doctor or healthcare provider advised you to stop any medications for this procedure then consult with them first about the safety of when you can start your medications again;**
- Otherwise, resume your normal medication schedule.
- If you **normally** take acetylsalicylic acid (Aspirin™) or another blood thinner medication, ask your doctor or healthcare provider when to start taking it again. Make sure that you understand exactly what they want you to do;
- Otherwise, **do not** take (Aspirin™) or anti-inflammatory medicines (such as ibuprofen) for one **week** after the procedure.



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## WHEN TO SEEK HELP<sup>1</sup>



### Call 911:

If you believe you require emergency care – **call 911**. Reasons to call 911 include:

- You have passed out (lose consciousness), or become very dizzy, weak, or less alert
- You experience sudden chest pain and shortness of breath; and/or
- You have severe trouble breathing
- Significant bleeding from the biopsy site (i.e. bright red blood that won't stop)<sup>1</sup>
- You have a fast or uneven pulse



### Call your doctor, healthcare provider, or Health Connect Ontario immediately if you experience<sup>1</sup>:

- Increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness at the biopsy site
- Redness or warmth around the biopsy site or pus or blood draining from the biopsy site
- A fever (more than 100°F / 38°C)
- Chills, with or without fever
- Bright red blood has soaked through the bandage / dressing over the biopsy site.
- You have new or worse pain at the biopsy site.
- You have blood in your urine for more than 1 day.
- A fast or skipping heartbeat.
- Yellowing of your eyes or skin that is not normal for you.
- Pain, swelling, or bloating in your belly (abdomen) that is getting worse.
- Bruising or swelling at the biopsy site that is getting bigger.
- Trouble peeing or passing stool (poop).
- Stools (poops) that are black and tar-like or have streaks of blood.
- Pale-coloured stools (poops) along with dark urine and itching.
- An upset stomach and you can't keep fluids down (you're throwing them up).
- Any other concerns.

**Health Connect Ontario may be reached 24-hours a day, including weekends, by:**

- Calling 8-1-1
- Calling 1-866-797-0007 (TTY – teletypewriter service)
- Visiting <https://healthconnectontario.health.gov.on.ca/> and selecting “Chat with us”

**BRING THIS INFORMATION PACKAGE WITH YOU SHOULD YOU URGENTLY NEED TO SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GO TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OF YOUR NEAREST HOSPITAL.**

*Use this material for your information only. It does not replace advice from your doctor or other health care professionals. Do not use this information for diagnosis or treatment. Consult with your health care provider about a specific medical condition.*

### References:

1. Needle Biopsy of the Liver. Accessed April 19, 2023. MyHealth.Alberta.ca Network. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/Pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=hw232128>
2. Percutaneous Liver Biopsy: What to Expect at Home. Accessed June 11, 2024. MyHealth.Alberta.ca Network. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/aftercareinformation/pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=zc2216>

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