Transjugular Liver Biopsy

Radiology Service

Information for patients

What is a transjugular liver biopsy?
A transjugular liver biopsy is a procedure performed under x-ray guidance to examine a questionable area of your liver. A small sample of tissue is removed and examined in a laboratory to provide a diagnosis.

What to Bring:
Bring any relevant imaging scans (film packet or a CD containing X-rays, CT scans, ultrasound or MRIs etc.)

Preparation:
You will be required to have a blood test prior to your procedure to check your kidney function and blood clotting levels.

At the time of booking and when you attend your procedure, tell staff if you have any allergies, have had a previous reaction to an x-ray dye or if you have kidney disease. This ensures that the appropriate measures are taken to carry out the procedure with maximum safety.

Arrange for someone to take you home from your procedure.

Eating/ drinking:
You will be required not to eat or drink for 4 hours prior to your procedure.

Medications:
Tell staff at the time of booking if you are taking any:
- Blood thinning medications (e.g. Warfarin, Xarelto, Rivaroxaban, Pradaxa, Apixaban, Eliquis).
- Antiplatelet medications (e.g. Clopidogrel, Plavix, Aspirin).
- Diabetic medication containing metformin.

You will be informed if you need to stop taking these medications before your procedure.

Continue taking other medications as prescribed, unless directed otherwise by medical or nursing staff prior to your procedure.

Please bring a list of all your medications with you to your appointment.

Procedure:
On arrival to the hospital a nurse will discuss with you your medical history and insert a small plastic tube (cannula) into a vein in your hand or arm.

The doctor will explain the procedure and discuss with you the potential risks and you will be asked to sign a consent form.

During the procedure you will be lying on your back on a bed in the angiography room. Your heart rate and blood pressure will be monitored by nursing staff. You may also be given medication to keep you comfortable and relaxed during your procedure if you require it.
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This procedure is performed by accessing the blood vessel in your neck called the internal jugular vein. Your neck will be cleaned with an antiseptic wash, and local anaesthetic will be used to numb a small section of skin on your neck. A small incision will be made and a small needle will be inserted through the numb patch of skin into the vein. A thin plastic tube called a sheath is then inserted into the vein and the needle is removed. You may feel some slight pressure in your neck when inserting the sheath but it shouldn’t be painful. The doctor will then use a longer plastic tube through the sheath to navigate into the liver to take a sample.

Once a sample is collected, the sheath will be removed and pressure will be applied to the puncture site by the doctor for approximately 10mins to stop any bleeding which may occur. A small waterproof dressing will then be placed over the puncture site.

Post Procedure Care:
You will be required to lie flat for 4 hours post procedure to prevent any bleeding from the puncture site. You will be transferred to the recovery area where you will be monitored by the nursing staff until you are ready to return to your ward or be discharged home.

Bruising and tenderness at the procedure site is to be expected and will subside after a few days. At home you should take simple pain relief such as paracetamol as required.

Discharge
Generally you will be able to go home 4 hours after your procedure if you have no other medical conditions or concerns that require further treatment.

You will be provided with an information sheet regarding discharge instructions upon completion of your procedure.

Results:
The results together with the procedure report will be sent to your referring doctor. Return to your doctor to discuss examination results.

Radiation Risk
Most medical imaging tests, except MRI and ultrasound, involve exposure to radiation from X-rays. Your doctor considers that the benefits of the examination you require to be greater than the small risk posed by the radiation exposure.

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References
Inside Radiology: www.insideradiology.com.au

If you would like to provide feedback or request this information in an alternative format, contact us at patient.information@alfred.org.au