

Patient Information for Ultrasound-Guided Fine-Needle Aspiration Biopsy

What is FNA Biopsy?

You have been referred for a Fine-Needle Aspiration (FNA) or Ultrasound-Guided Fine-Needle Aspiration (USFNA) biopsy by your health care provider. This is because a palpable or non-palpable lesion was discovered and your physician wants to determine what it is. In the past, the only way to do this was to have you go to the hospital and undergo a surgical procedure that may be painful, might cause scarring, have more complications, and involve a longer period of anxiety while waiting for the results. With the use of FNA or USFNA, all this is unnecessary in many cases. We can now sample your lesion using only a small, thin needle that will leave a mark no bigger than a needle stick from a blood test. Furthermore, this test will most often allow us to make a diagnosis of your lesion within 2 to 3 days of the test.

How is the biopsy performed?

First the doctor will ask you some questions about the lesion: where it is, how and when you first became aware of it, and if you've noticed any changes in it. Next the doctor will feel the lesion, if palpable, and will use ultrasound to confirm its size and location. The doctor will give you an opportunity to ask any questions you might have about the procedure. After all your questions and concerns have been addressed, the actual procedure will begin. Using ultrasound, the doctor will guide a thin needle into the lesion to collect the samples. After a sample is collected, the doctor will examine the slide under a microscope to check that there is enough tissue to reduce the need for a second office visit.

How long will the procedure take?

Each sample will only take about 10 seconds to obtain. The whole procedure from start to finish takes no more than 20 to 30 minutes. However, please allow an hour for your visit because of registration.

When will I get my results?

Generally, your results should be available from your referring provider's office in 2 to 3 working days. The results can be grouped into 3 categories:

- Clearly benign (not cancer)
- Clearly malignant (cancer)
- Non-definitive, less clear (most often this will be followed by additional testing)

How reliable is this test?

In the hands of a skilled FNA practitioner, this test is very reliable. In the instance of a clearly benign diagnosis, it may prevent you from undergoing surgery. In the case of a clearly malignant diagnosis, a treatment strategy can be planned with your doctor. In the less frequent occurrence of a non-definitive diagnosis, either repetition of the FNA or a surgical biopsy is usually recommended.

Can I drive after the procedure?

Yes! No anesthesia is required for the biopsy since the needle is smaller than one used for a typical blood test. You will be able to drive and can even return to work immediately after the procedure. Given the relative simplicity of this procedure, there are no restrictions to your daily activities.

What complications might arise?

FNA or USFNA biopsy when carried out by an experienced doctor is virtually free of significant complications. The most common complication is a slight bruising or tenderness of the area for a few days following the procedure. Discomfort should be relieved by an over the counter pain reliever such as Tylenol or the application of an ice pack for short periods following your return home. If you experience swelling that does not go away, continued bleeding, a fever over 100°F, or if you experience pain that is not helped by Tylenol or other non-aspirin products, call your doctor's office immediately.

For your appointment bring:

- Insurance card/information
- Referring physician order
- Identification

Directions to Office:

Knoxville FNA Clinic
139 Fox Road, Suite 203
Knoxville, TN 37922
(865) 888-7747

Located in the Keystone II office complex on Fox Road, about a 1/4th mile off Kingston Pike with reserved parking (look for signs). Entrance is to the far left of the building. Follow the signs for Knoxville FNA Clinic.