

This document will give you information about a lung biopsy. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is a lung biopsy?

A lung biopsy involves removing small pieces of abnormal lung tissue using a needle. The procedure is performed by a radiologist (doctor who specialises in x-rays and scans).

What are the benefits of a lung biopsy?

If there is a problem in your lung that has shown up on an x-ray or scan, a lung biopsy is a good way of finding out what the problem is.

Are there any alternatives to a lung biopsy?

There are no alternatives to help your doctor to find out exactly what is causing the problem.

What does the procedure involve?

A lung biopsy usually takes less than 45 minutes. It involves inserting a needle through your chest wall and into your lung. The radiologist may use an x-ray, CT or ultrasound scan to help decide exactly where to take the samples from. The radiologist will insert the needle between your ribs, and into the abnormal area in your lung. They will use the needle to take small samples of lung tissue (see figure 1).

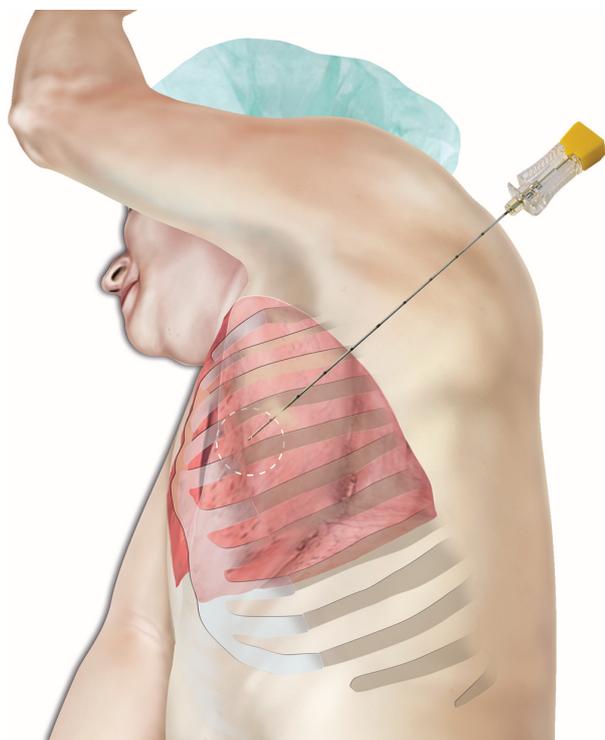


Figure 1
A lung biopsy

The samples will be examined under a microscope to find out the cause of your problem.

What complications can happen?

- Pain
- Pneumothorax (a collection of air)
- Allergic reaction
- Bleeding from a biopsy site

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home after a few hours. You should be able to return to work the next day unless you are told otherwise. The healthcare team will discuss with you any treatment or follow-up you need.

Summary

A lung biopsy is usually a safe and effective way of finding out about a problem in your lung.

Acknowledgements

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This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.