



FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION (FNA) AND CORE BIOPSY

What is FNA and/or Biopsy?

Both procedures are similar and involve removing a small amount of tissues or cells using a needle. The sample is then sent to Pathology for interpretation by a medical specialist known as a Pathologist.

A **Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA)** involves inserting a thin needle into the tissue that requires sampling and then applying suction to the needle tip whilst turning it. This removes cells that are then analysed. The advantage of an FNA is that it is slightly less invasive than a biopsy, however as the cell samples are small it is possible that the specimen obtained is not sufficient for a confident diagnosis to be made. The procedure may then need to be repeated or “upgraded” to a biopsy.

A **Biopsy** involves the use of a larger needle, which removes a solid block of tissue (known as a “core”) and is therefore slightly more invasive, though usually feels no different from an FNA as adequate local anaesthetic is used in both procedures. Since a core of solid tissue is removed (unlike the FNA where cells are withdrawn), the specimen is typically sufficient so that a confident and definitive diagnosis can be made.

My results:

The results of the FNA/biopsy are dependent on the time it takes for the Pathologist to review and thoroughly test all the tissue under a microscope. Usually, the results are available within 2-4 days and should be discussed with your referring doctor at a follow-up appointment. Should the Pathologist wish to carry out additional special analysis to gain an accurate diagnosis then the process may take longer.

What should I expect when I have my FNA or Biopsy?

You will be asked to lie on an examination bed with the area of clinical interest exposed. The risks and possible complications will be discussed with you prior to this procedure and with your acceptance we will proceed.

The area will be cleaned with a hospital grade antiseptic wash and scanned using the relevant radiological equipment (ultrasound or CT). By locating this area under ultrasound or CT guidance we can ensure precision in locating and aspirating/biopsying the area of clinical interest.

A small amount of local anaesthetic will be administered. You may experience brief discomfort which will pass once the local anaesthetic has taken effect, this generally takes only a few seconds. Once the area is anaesthetised a fine needle is then directed into the area of clinical interest and aspirated/biopsied. The obtained sample is then sent for pathological interpretation. Once the procedure is complete our Radiologist will discuss post-procedural care with you.

Are there any risks or side effects from these procedures?

As with all medical procedures there are risks. Your doctor has sent you for this test knowing that the information provided by this procedure is more beneficial than the very low risk associated with it. The risks and possible complications will be discussed with you prior to the procedure.



Exact Radiology
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How do I prepare for my FNA and/or Biopsy

When you phone to arrange your appointment one of our friendly reception staff will advise you of the preparation and requirements of this procedure. We will also need to know if you are currently on blood thinners such as Warfarin or Aspirin.

Blood thinning medications that you are currently taking should be ceased prior to this procedure. This should be discussed with your Health Care Professional prior to making your appointment.

(Aspirin and Warfarin for 5 days, Plavix for 7 days and Iscover for 8 days). If you have had a heart valve replacement, it may be necessary to take antibiotics before the procedure. Please discuss this with your Cardiologist/Cardiac Surgeon and take antibiotics as directed.

Fasting is generally not required, unless otherwise specified.

We ask that you bring a responsible person to drive you home afterwards.

Things to bring along to your appointment:

- Previous films for area of clinical interest.
- Medicare or Department of Veteran Affairs card (as we bulk bill all eligible Medicare services).
- Referral (this is a legal requirement).

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