

Preparation for Kidney Biopsy

Why do a kidney biopsy?

A kidney biopsy is sometimes necessary to make a definitive diagnosis of your kidney disease so that we can provide the appropriate treatment.

Where is the kidney biopsy performed?

The kidney biopsy is performed in the Ultrasound Station of the Radiology Department located on Level B1 of the Main Hospital.

How do I prepare for the biopsy?

Usually lab work is ordered by your Nephrologist. This may include a test for blood clotting. Take the lab slips to the 3rd floor of the Taubman Center Laboratory (across from Reception Area C) either the day before or the morning of the biopsy.

Do not take aspirin or over-the-counter pain medication (Advil, Motrin, Naprosyn, etc.) for at least one week before the biopsy.

Your Nephrologist will advise you on which medications to take the day of the biopsy.

On the day of the biopsy, after showering, please eat only a very light breakfast; e.g., a cup of coffee or tea, or a glass of juice, and two pieces of bread.

For the biopsy, go to the reception room of the ultrasound station located at the B1 level (basement, floor 1) of the Main Hospital building. The ultrasound technician will bring you to the biopsy room.

BRING ALL YOUR MEDICATIONS

How is the kidney biopsy performed?

You will lie in a bed on your stomach with a foam rubber cushion beneath your abdomen. The cushion will help stabilize your kidney during the biopsy procedure.

The site of the kidney biopsy is usually at the left side of your back just below your lowest rib. We will locate the exact site of the biopsy by ultrasound. The skin will be washed with antiseptic before the biopsy.

A local anesthetic (Novocaine or Xylocaine) will be injected into the biopsy area to anesthetize your skin and muscles down to the level of the kidney. A small incision (about half an inch) will be made at the site of the biopsy.

During the placement of the anesthetic, the doctor will ask you to breathe slowly but deeply in and out in order to help locate the surface of the kidney.

After we have identified the depth of the kidney, a biopsy needle will be inserted into the surface of the kidney. A piece of tissue about 1/8 inch wide and 1/2 inch long will be taken (it

takes only ten seconds for the actual biopsy to be done). Two or three pieces of kidney tissue will be taken by this procedure.

Immediately after the biopsy, a nurse in the Ambulatory Care Unit will observe you for several hours. Your blood pressure will be monitored frequently after the biopsy.

The most common complication after the biopsy is bleeding. The bleeding usually stops within 24 hours after the biopsy. In a small proportion of people (less than 2%) bleeding is prolonged or requires additional medicine to stop. If this happens to you, we would ask that you remain in the hospital overnight for observation and whatever other measures may be required in your particular case.

What will I feel during the biopsy?

You will be conscious throughout the biopsy procedure. Every effort will be made to minimize the pain during the biopsy procedure. The doctor will explain each step of the procedure at the time of the biopsy.

Occasionally when the doctor is asking you to breathe deeply in and out, you may feel slightly dizzy or nauseated because of hyperventilation. The feeling of dizziness disappears when you breathe normally.

Several hours after the kidney biopsy, when the anesthetic wears off, you may feel some pain at the site of biopsy. Tylenol is effective at relieving this pain.

In some cases you will be able to go home on the same day. However, be prepared to stay overnight. You should arrange for a relative or friend to drive you home rather than plan to drive yourself.

What should I do once I get home?

After the biopsy, you should rest at home. You can resume your regular activities the following day, but avoid intensive exercise or lifting for two days.

Observe your urine color. Sometimes you may have blood in the urine the day after the biopsy. If this happens, call your doctor. Your doctor can be reached through the paging operator at (734) 936-6267 at University of Michigan. You can also call our clinic nurse, Marcia Thyron at (734) 763-4688 during regular business hours (7:30am-4pm) on weekdays.

When will I know my results?

The kidney tissue will be processed for regular histology, electron microscopy and the special staining examinations. These processes take approximately one week. Therefore, your doctor will be able to discuss your results and treatments at your next scheduled clinic visit.

If you do not have a scheduled appointment within one to two weeks after your biopsy, call our scheduling desk at 888-287-1084 and arrange to be seen.

If you have any further questions either before or after the biopsy, please call our Nephrology Nursing Staff at (734) 936-5548.