

Having a Neck Ultrasound

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This leaflet is designed to answer some of the questions you may have about your forthcoming ultrasound examination. Whilst we endeavour to scan every patient at their allocated time, some scans may take longer than expected which can unfortunately result in a delay. If, after reading this, you still have any worries or queries, please telephone the diagnostic imaging department appointments office on (01493) 452456 between 8:30am – 5pm Monday – Friday.

What is a neck ultrasound?

Ultrasound is a method of examining parts of the body using soundwaves which produce a picture and provides the doctors with information to help diagnose your problem.

How do I prepare for my ultrasound examination?

An ultrasound scan requires little to no preparation. Leave jewellery at home and wear loose, comfortable clothing. If you have long hair then it will need to be tied out of the way for the scan.

Can I bring a relative or a friend?

Yes. Ideally no more than one person may come with you but they will be asked to wait outside the ultrasound room during the actual procedure.

When do I get the results ?

The results will usually be available a week later and your doctor may see you in clinic to let you know what they say.

Some patients having neck ultrasound may require a biopsy. It is important to state that not every patient having ultrasound of the neck will have a biopsy at the same time. This decision is made at the time of the scan.

What is ultrasound guided biopsy of the neck?

On some occasions following an ultrasound scan of the neck it is necessary to offer a neck biopsy, a procedure to take a tissue sample of a neck lump with a small needle. The sample or biopsy is sent to the laboratory to be analysed.

INFORMATION ABOUT ULTRASOUND GUIDED BIOPSY OF THE NECK

What are the risks?

Neck biopsy is considered a safe procedure and very rarely causes any complications. Occasionally some patients develop a bruise or a haematoma (a collection of blood under your skin). The person performing your biopsy will discuss the specific risks with you before asking your permission to perform the biopsy.

Are there different types of biopsies?

Yes, fine needle aspiration (FNA) or core biopsy.

In FNA, as the name suggests, a very fine needle is used and therefore there is no need to give an anaesthetic to make the area numb.

For a core biopsy a slightly thicker needle is used and you will be given a local anaesthetic. It will be injected into your skin to make the area numb before the biopsy is carried out.

Does it hurt?

You should only feel a minor scratch or discomfort during the biopsy.

You may feel a small scratch or sting if you are given a local anaesthetic.

How is the procedure performed?

If a biopsy is performed your skin will be cleaned and a small needle will be inserted into the area. The needle is then removed and the sample is sent to the laboratory to be analysed.

The biopsy will usually only need to be performed once but if the sample is not enough to make a diagnosis you may need to have a further biopsy taken.

The whole examination may last between 20-30 minutes.

What happens after the procedure?

You will be asked to stay in the department for approximately ten minutes for observation. In this time you will be offered a hot drink. We advise you to avoid vigorous physical activity for 24 hours after the biopsy. Most people are comfortable enough to go back to work the same day or the day after this procedure.

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This leaflet was produced by the Ultrasound Department as a service to patients.

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

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The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240