

Fine needle aspiration

Patient Information

This patient information sheet should answer any questions you have about your procedure. If you still have questions after reading this, you can visit the Diagnostics section of our website www.theholly.com, telephone the Diagnostic Centre on 020 8936 1202 or email diagnostics@theholly.com

What is a fine needle aspiration?

This is a procedure where a needle is inserted into a lump or mass in your body to remove cells or fluid so that it can be examined under a microscope. This is to help your doctor decide the best course of treatment for your condition.

The procedure is carried out by a Consultant Radiologist (a doctor who specialises in interpreting medical images) who uses imaging as a guide (usually ultrasound imaging).

How should I prepare for the procedure?

Please inform the Diagnostics Department if you have any allergies at the time of booking. We will explain the procedure to you and ask you to sign a consent form when you come for your procedure.

What will happen during the procedure?

You will be given the opportunity to ask any questions that you still have before the procedure starts. You will lie on the scanning table in the position that the Radiologist suggests is most suitable. The Radiologist will keep everything sterile and will wear sterile gloves. Your skin will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution and you will have some of your body covered with a theatre towel. Your Consultant Radiologist will use the ultrasound machine to decide on the most suitable point for inserting the needle. The needle will be inserted into the lump and fluid or tissue will be removed for examination. When the needle is removed, pressure is applied to the area briefly (to reduce the chance of bleeding or bruising) and the puncture site is covered with a plaster.

On rare occasions it may be necessary to introduce a small amount of local anaesthetic to the area of concern.

How long does the procedure last?

The procedure should last around 20 minutes, although this can vary. A small dressing is applied to the puncture site and you will be required to relax for a further 10 to 15 minutes before leaving the Diagnostic Centre.

Will it hurt?

Most patients find that this test is no more painful than having a blood test. The needle is very small and the procedure is very quick.

What happens afterwards?

The procedure is carried out as an outpatient and no aftercare is required. The sample taken during the procedure is sent to our Pathology laboratory for processing and diagnosis and we will send the results to your referring consultant.

Please ensure you make a follow-up appointment with your referring consultant to discuss your results.

Important billing information for private patients

We respectfully request that your account is settled either by insurance authorisation of payment at the time of your appointment. Please be aware that you will receive a separate invoice from the Pathology Department for the histology tests. If you have any queries about this you can contact the department on 020 8936 1204.

If you fail to attend any appointments or if less than 24 hours' notice is given to cancel an appointment we will charge a fee.

Further information

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further queries. You can telephone the Diagnostic Centre on 020 8936 1202 or email diagnostics@theholly.com. Alternatively you can visit the Diagnostics section of our website www.theholly.com

If you would like a copy of this information in large print or an alternative language, please call 020 8936 1214.

Please note we are unable to provide child care facilities during your examination and in most cases children will be unable to accompany you into the examination rooms.

Call: 020 8505 3311 (Main Switchboard)

Call: 020 8936 1202 (Diagnostics Centre)

Email: diagnostics@theholly.com

Visit: theholly.com

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