



## Patient Information on Liver Biopsy

### *Preparing for a percutaneous liver biopsy*

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A liver biopsy is done to remove a small piece of your liver. This sample is checked under a microscope to see if there is any disease or damage. After your doctors have received your consent, the biopsy will be done.

The Radiology department, using ultrasound, has marked the best spot to do the biopsy. This biopsy site is cleaned with a soapy solution (Betadine<sup>®</sup>), and the biopsy is done under sterile conditions to avoid infection. The skin and tissues over the liver will be numbed using lidocaine (a novocaine-like drug). The biopsy needle is then passed into your liver and a small core of liver tissue is taken to study under the microscope.

Right after the biopsy, a dressing will be placed over the site, and you will be asked to lie on your right side for 4 hours (to put pressure on the biopsy site). If there are no problems or complications during this 4-hour period, you can then lie on your back, sit up in bed, and resume a normal diet. You will be watched for another 2 hours. You will be monitored for a total of at least 6 hours before being discharged.

### **Complications**

These are the most common complications:

- Pain at the biopsy site is usually mild and disappears within a few hours. Usually simple pain medicines are all that are necessary.
- Bleeding can develop for up to 10 to 14 days after a liver biopsy, but most times it is minor and no medical treatment is needed.
- Significant bleeding that would require a blood transfusion does not happen very often.

## Questions?

Your questions are important to us. Call your Transplant Coordinator or Patient Care Coordinator, if you have questions or concerns.

**Transplant Services  
206-598-6700**

**Hepatology  
206-598-2217**

For questions concerning your procedure today call:

4-South, Special  
Procedure Unit at  
206-598-4670

Transplant Clinic on  
Mon., Tues., Wed., Fri.  
at 206-598-7373

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Rare complications include, but are not limited to:

- Puncture of other organs.
- A collection of blood under the liver capsule (hematoma).
- Leakage of bile from the liver surface.
- Infection.
- Low blood pressure.
- Death.

Please ask your doctors if you have any questions.

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