



Diagnostic Hospital Thoracentesis

Patient and Caregiver Information

Thoracentesis

Your doctor has advised you that you need a thoracentesis. This guide will help communicate what will happen before, during and after your thoracentesis. It was written to inform you about your test and answer the most frequently asked questions.

What is a Thoracentesis?

A thoracentesis is a procedure to remove fluid build up from the space around your lung. This is done by placing a small needle between two ribs into the space around your lung. The fluid is drained through a small tube and the needle is removed. The fluid can be removed to help you breathe easier or to examine it in the laboratory.

Preparation

You will receive a phone call reminding you of your procedure. Be sure to ask any questions when our staff calls.

- Inform your doctor prior to the procedure if you take medications that thin your blood.
- The following medications should be stopped.

Medication Name	STOP Medication on this Date	RESTART Medication on this Date

What do I do before my procedure?

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your procedure.
- Arrange for a responsible adult to drive you home after the procedure and stay with you for the next 24 hours.

Day of Procedure

What do I do the day of my procedure?

- Report to the hospital 1.5 hours prior to your scheduled procedure time and check in with our concierge.
- After checking in you will be taken back to a room to get you ready for the procedure.
- A member of the staff will come to your room and inform you of the procedure.
- Once the procedure is complete a nurse will oversee your recovery for a short time to ensure you are safe to go home.

During the Procedure

Will I have anesthesia?

You will not have any anesthesia during this procedure. A small amount of numbing medicine will be injected into the site where the needle will be placed to keep you comfortable during the procedure.

After the Procedure

What should I expect after my procedure?

- Once the procedure is complete a nurse will oversee your recovery for a short time after the procedure to ensure you are safe to go home.
- Limit your activity for the rest of the day. Avoid lifting or pushing more than 10 pounds for 1 to 2 days after the procedure.
- You may return to work after 24 hours, unless your doctor instructs you otherwise.
- It is normal to run a slight fever for 24 hours after a procedure. If you are experiencing a fever 100.4°F or greater which lasts for more than 1 day it may be a sign of infection. Please call your doctor or the nurse.

Will I have pain?

You may have a sore spot where the needle was placed between your ribs for a day or two. Advil or Tylenol may help ease the soreness.

If you experience unusual or severe chest pain or chest tightness following your procedure, please call your doctor or the nurse immediately.

Questions for my doctor
