

Having a Bronchoscopy

Endoscopy Department



Patient information leaflet

You will have been given this leaflet if you are to undergo a bronchoscopy at the Royal Surrey County Hospital Endoscopy Unit. This leaflet will explain what the procedure involves, how to prepare for the procedure and what to expect post procedure.

What is a Bronchoscopy?

This is a procedure which allows the endoscopist to examine the main breathing tubes in the lungs by passing a special fibre optic tube through the nose or mouth, into the breathing passages.

Are there any alternatives to this procedure?

There are no alternatives to a bronchoscopy as all diagnostic procedures are carried out under direct vision. Consequences for not having the procedure should have been discussed with you by your GP / consultant before referring you for a bronchoscopy.

Are there any risks?

Bronchoscopy is a safe procedure, which is performed regularly. However, all medical procedures carry some risk.

- Your nose and throat may be a little sore for a day or so afterwards. You may feel tired or sleepy for several hours, caused by the sedative. There is a slightly increased risk of developing a throat or chest infection following a bronchoscopy. You will be given contact details if you need advice.
- If samples are taken from the lungs, there is a risk of bleeding. It is rare for this to be severe. More commonly, people may cough up small amounts of blood for a couple of days after the procedure. If tissue samples are taken from further down in the lungs (trans-bronchial biopsies), then it is possible that a small air-leak may occur. Usually, such leaks are very small and heal themselves immediately. Less commonly, collapse of the lung may occur in which case it may be necessary to insert a temporary drain to allow the air to escape.

What preparation is required?

You must not have any food **FOR SIX HOURS BEFORE THE PROCEDURE** but you may drink clear fluids (water) up to **TWO HOURS** before the test.

You may take essential medication at the usual times, but please contact the endoscopy unit if you are taking blood thinning medications. These include: Warfarin, Clopidogrel, Prasugrel, Ticagrelor, Dabigatran, Rivaroxiban, Apixaban, Fragmin and Edoxaban. You will need to stop taking these medications prior to your procedure, so please contact the Endoscopy Unit as soon as possible for advice on **(01483) 571122 ext 4409**.

When you arrive, you will be seen by a nurse who will check your medical history. You will be asked to put a gown on and remove any dentures. A small needle will be inserted into your hand or arm to allow staff to administer sedation in the procedure room.

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This states that you agree to have the treatment and you understand what it involves. You should receive the leaflet, **Helping you decide: our consent policy**, which gives you more information. If you do not, please ask a member of staff caring for you for a copy.

What is involved?

- A local anaesthetic spray will be used to numb your nasal passages, the back of your throat and the windpipe. This helps to reduce any coughing as the tube is inserted. You will have a tooth guard inserted and sedation will be administered through the needle in the back of your hand or arm. The effects of the local anaesthetic will wear off after two hours. You are advised not to eat or drink after the test for two hours.
- The doctor will insert the tip of the bronchoscope into one of your nostrils and then gently guide it round the back of your throat into your windpipe (trachea). (It is sometimes passed via your mouth rather than via your nose if you have narrow nasal passages.) The bronchoscope may make you cough.

- The doctor looks down the bronchoscope and inspects the lining of your trachea and main bronchi (the main airways). Bronchoscopes transmit pictures through a camera attachment onto a TV monitor for the doctor to look at.
- The doctor may take one or more samples (biopsies) of parts of the inside lining of the airways – depending on why the test is done and what they see. This is painless. The biopsy samples are sent to the laboratory for testing and to be looked at under the microscope.
- Sometimes bronchial lavage is done. This is a procedure where some fluid is squirted into a section of the lung and then syringed back. The fluid is then examined in the laboratory to look for abnormal cells and other particles that may be present in certain diseases.

What happens post procedure?

After the procedure you will be taken to the recovery area, where you will need to rest quietly until the sedative has worn off. The nurse will check your blood pressure and pulse. When you are safe to be transferred, you will be escorted to our patient lounge where you will be discharged home with your next of kin and given post procedure information and advice. You will not be able to drink fluids for two hours post procedure.

Going home

If you have sedation, you must have someone to escort you home and stay with you for 24 hours. He/she should come with you for the appointment or be contactable by phone when you are ready to leave. If you do not have an escort or have not arranged for someone to collect you, then your procedure will be cancelled. If you are unable to arrange someone to collect you, please contact us to discuss alternative arrangements.

The sedation lasts longer than you may think, so in the first 24 hours after your examination, you should not:

- drive or ride a bicycle
- operate machinery or do anything requiring skill or judgement

- drink alcohol
- take sleeping tablets
- go to work
- make any important decisions, sign contracts or legal documents.

You should rest at home following your procedure, you can eat and drink normally and should be able to carry out your normal activities 24 hours after the test.

What do I need to do after I go home?

If you have a question or concern after the test, please phone the Endoscopy Unit on **(01483) 571122** ext. **4409** between 8am–6pm.

Please consult your GP, contact 111, contact Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Accident and Emergency department on **(01483) 571122** ext. **4293** or go to your nearest A&E department if you develop post procedure complications.

When will I know the results?

Before you leave the endoscopy unit you will be given an appointment for the outpatient's clinic to discuss the results of your bronchoscopy.

Points to remember:

- If you are unable to keep your appointment please notify the endoscopy unit.
- Contact the endoscopy unit if you take any blood thinning medications as detailed earlier in the leaflet.
- Bring a list of your up to date medications.
- Please make arrangements for someone to take you home post procedure and stay with you for 24 hours.
- You will not be able to drink or eat for 2 hours post procedure. You will not be allowed to drive, operate machinery, ride a push bike or motorbike, consume alcohol and sign legal documents for 24 hours.

Reference source

- <http://patient.info/health/bronchoscopy>

Contact details

If you require further information or advice, please feel free to contact us.

Endoscopy Unit

Telephone: 01483 571122 **ext** 4409 (08:00-17:00, Monday to Friday)

Secretary to Dr McAllister

Telephone: 01483 571122 **ext** 4572 (09:00-17:00, Monday to Friday)

Secretary to Dr Alexander

Telephone: 01483 571122 **ext** 6505 (09:00-17:00, Monday to Friday)

Secretary to Dr Dakin

Telephone: 01483 571122 **ext** 6504 (09:00-17:00, Monday to Friday)

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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