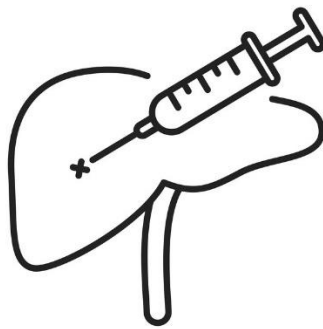


Percutaneous Liver Biopsy: What to Expect

A liver biopsy is a procedure that removes a sample of your liver for examination. It helps diagnose conditions like cirrhosis, fatty liver disease, and hepatitis, determine the stage of a disease, and/or monitor the liver after a transplant.

The most common type of liver biopsy is a percutaneous liver biopsy. “Percutaneous” means “through the skin”. The doctor inserts the biopsy needle directly through the skin of your abdomen and into your liver. This method is often the first choice, as it is the least invasive.



How should I prepare for a liver biopsy?

Before the procedure, you will be required to stop certain medications like blood thinners, avoid anything to eat or drink for several hours beginning the night before, and arrange for a ride home after the procedure. After the biopsy, you will require rest for the remainder of the day and must avoid strenuous activity for 48 hours. It is normal to experience pain or soreness for a few days after your biopsy.

How long does a liver biopsy usually take?

While the procedure itself usually takes less than 10 minutes, expect the overall visit to last 4-6 hours. This allows for preparation before and 2 hours of monitoring and observation after the procedure.

How long does it take to recover from a liver biopsy?

You will need to take it easy at home for 1-2 days after the procedure. You should be able to return to work and most of your usual daily activities after that.

How painful is a liver biopsy?

The doctor will administer lidocaine injections to numb the area and light sedation. You will not be fully sedated. After the biopsy, you may feel some pain around the biopsy site or in your right shoulder. This shoulder pain is called “referred pain” and is common.