

Fine Needle Aspirate of Thyroid

Patient Information

A fine needle aspiration biopsy samples a thyroid nodule to help determine if it is cancer or not. In the procedure, a small needle is passed through the skin into the thyroid nodule, and suction is applied with/without a syringe as the needle is moved up and down within the nodule. This aspiration process draws a sample of cells and other material up through the needle into the syringe. The needle is then removed and the sample is placed on a glass slide where it can be stained and examined under a microscope.

Precautions: Tell your doctor if you have ever had an allergic reaction to local anaesthetics such as the numbing medicine used at the dentist's office. If you take warfarin or other medicines that affect blood clotting ('blood thinning medications'), talk with your doctor. It may be necessary to stop these medicines before your test.

How do I prepare for the procedure? If you are on Warfarin or Clopidogrel you will need to see your local Doctor to arrange for you to stop these medications and to organise you to have other medications during that time. You will also need to have a blood test the day before your procedure to ensure your blood clotting times are normal. You will need to fast for two (2) hours before your procedure. You will also need to arrange for someone to drive you home afterwards.

Please bring your Medicare card with you and any ultrasound CT or x-ray you may have that are relevant to your procedure.

What complications are there from the test?

Complications of a fine needle aspiration biopsy are rare. There is no need to skip meals before or after a fine needle aspiration biopsy. Most patients carry on with usual daily activities after the procedure. There may be some bruising at the site following the procedure. Sometimes there is aching in the neck after the procedure. This can be relieved with medication like Panadol.

"Respect, communication, involvement"

The staff in Diagnostic Imaging want to make sure that you have understood the information that we have provided personally, as well as the information contained in the information sheet. We believe your understanding about why and how we are planning to assist you is very important.