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**Ashford Hospital**  
London Road  
Ashford, Middlesex  
TW15 3AA  
Tel: **01784 884488**

**St. Peter's Hospital**  
Guildford Road  
Chertsey, Surrey  
KT16 0PZ.  
Tel: **01932 872000**

Website: [www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk](http://www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk)

# Transrectal Prostatic Ultrasound and Biopsy

## Interventional Imaging Department



This leaflet tells you about having a prostate ultrasound and biopsy. It explains what is involved and what the possible risks are. It is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor, but can act as a starting point for such discussions. If you have any questions about the procedure please ask the doctor who has referred you for the test or the department which is going to perform it.

## What is a prostatic biopsy?

A needle biopsy is a way of taking a small sample tissue out of your body, using a special needle. This allows the doctors to look at the sample under a microscope to find out what it is. This will allow an accurate diagnosis and treatment plan for you. As this biopsy is done through the back passage, it is called a Transrectal Prostatic Ultrasound and Biopsy.

## Why do you need a biopsy?

One of your prior blood tests has shown that you have an altered level of the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA). This is a chemical that is released by your prostate gland and can indicate an underlying abnormality within the gland. The only way to confirm whether there is a true abnormality or not is by taking tiny samples of your prostate and to look at it under a microscope.

If you get a lot of bleeding in the urine or from the back passage, especially with clots of blood, you should come to the Emergency Department at St Peter's Hospital directly.

## Finally

Some of your questions should have been answered by this leaflet, but remember that this is only a starting point for discussion about your treatment with the doctors looking after you. Make sure you are satisfied that you have received enough information about the procedure.

*This information is primarily based on the British Association of Urological Surgeons (2014).*

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## Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email [asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net](mailto:asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net). If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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## How long will it take?

Every patient is different, and it is not always easy to predict; however, expect to be in the radiology department for about 45 minutes – 1 hour.

## What happens afterwards?

You will get changed and be asked to wait in the reception area. You will be encouraged to eat and drink plenty of fluids until you feel the urge to urinate. You will then be free to leave the clinic with a follow-up appointment to receive your results.

## What to expect when you get home?

You should drink twice as much fluid in the first 48 hours and avoid physically demanding activities. It is very important that you complete your antibiotics to reduce the risk of infection. If you experience discomfort from your biopsy, this is usually relieved by simple painkillers such as paracetamol.

## What should I look out for?

A fever or shivering requires urgent action, please attend the Emergency department at St Peter's Hospital immediately so that a doctor can assess you.

## Are there any risks?

Prostatic biopsies are a very safe procedure, but as with any medical procedure there are some risks and complications that can arise:

- 1) **Pain:** The local anesthetic and painkillers should help to keep you comfortable. It is common to have some discomfort for a further few days after the procedure. This should be adequately controlled with paracetamol.
- 2) **Bleeding:** It is normal to have bleeding from your back passage and in your urine for up to a week, and in your sperm for up to a month. However, the bleeding is sometimes heavy and may require a blood transfusion (risk of 1 in 500).
- 3) **Infection:** There is also a risk of infection (risk of 2 in 100) but we aim to reduce this risk with the administration of antibiotics around the time of your procedure. It is vital to let your doctor know if you get a high temperature, feel unwell or have a burning sensation when you urinate.
- 4) **Injury to nearby structures:** This does not usually cause any major problems but will require further observations.
- 5) **Failure of procedure:** Unfortunately, some biopsies fail to give an answer. This may be because, despite taking every possible care, the piece of tissue which has actually been obtained is normal tissue rather than abnormal. Alternatively although abnormal tissue has been obtained,

it may not be enough for the pathologist (an expert in making diagnoses from tissue samples) to make a definite diagnosis.

### **Who has made the decision?**

The consultant in charge of your care, and the radiologist performing the procedure have discussed your case and feel that this is the best option. However, you will also have the opportunity for your opinion to be considered and if, after discussion with your doctors, you no longer want the procedure, you can decide against it.

### **Are you required to make any special preparations?**

You may eat and drink normally before your appointment. You should let your doctor know about any medications that you are taking and follow their advice. In particular, you will be required to stop certain blood thinning medications prior to your biopsy. You will be informed of this by telephone before your procedure.

### **Who will you see?**

A specially trained consultant called a Radiologist. They have special expertise in reading the images and using imaging to guide the needle to the abnormal area.

### **Where will the procedure take place?**

This will take place in the radiology department using ultrasound guidance.

### **What happens during the biopsy?**

You will be asked to get undressed and put on a hospital gown. You will be asked to lie on your left side with your knees drawn up to your chest. The doctor will then examine the prostate through the back passage using an ultrasound probe. This probe is as wide as a man's thumb and approximately 4 inches long. In most cases, the doctor will then take samples of your prostate. Local anesthetic will first be injected around the prostate with a fine needle before the samples are taken. The insertion of the needle for both injection of anesthetic and sampling may cause mild-moderate discomfort and has been likened to the discomfort experienced from a blood test needle. The whole procedure should take no longer than 30 minutes.

### **Will it hurt?**

When the local anesthetic is injected, it will sting for a short while, but this soon wears off. Mild-moderate discomfort may then be felt when the biopsy sample is taken. This discomfort can sometimes last for 48-72 hours after your procedure.