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# Ultrasound Guided FNA Thyroid Imaging Department



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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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# **Ultrasound Guided Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA) of the Thyroid**

## **What is fine needle aspiration?**

Fine needle aspiration uses a very small needle to extract a small sample of thyroid tissue. The sample is then examined under a microscope so that a diagnosis can be made.

When a nodule has been detected within the thyroid, ultrasound is used to guide the FNA to ensure that the correct area has been sampled. This will enable your referring Doctor to determine whether this is a benign [non-cancerous] or malignant [cancerous] nodule.

## **Preparing for ultrasound guided FNA**

There is no specific preparation necessary.

Please inform the Radiologist or Sonographer if you are taking any medication used to thin the blood, such as aspirin or warfarin.

## **How is the procedure performed?**

A radiologist or Sonographer will perform the FNA. A Radiography Department assistant [RDA] /or nurse will also be present during the procedure.

The Thyroid will be scanned to locate the abnormal area. The neck will be cleansed with antiseptic. Lidocaine [local anesthetic] to numb the area may or may not be used. An ultrasound transducer with a small amount of sterile water soluble gel will be placed on your neck over the thyroid nodule. The radiologist / sonographer will insert a small needle through the skin under direct imaging guidance, advance it to the site of the thyroid nodule and aspirate samples of tissue. After the sampling, the needle will be removed. If additional samples are required new needles will be reinserted. Several specimens may be needed for a complete analysis.

The needle will then be removed and some pressure applied to the neck to reduce bruising. The sample obtained from the thyroid will be spread onto glass slides and sent to the laboratory for analysis.

A small plaster will be applied.

The process takes 20-30 minutes although the needle is only in the thyroid for approximately 10 - 20 seconds.

## **What happens after the FNA?**

Both the radiology report, and the result of the FNA analysis from the pathology lab, will be sent to your referring doctor. You will need to make an appointment to see your referring doctor to discuss the results. You should allow 7 working days for the pathology report to be available.

## **What will I experience during and after the procedure?**

You may feel some pressure on your neck from the ultrasound transducer and mild discomfort as the needle is moved to obtain the cells.

You will be asked to remain still and not to cough, talk, swallow or make a sound during the procedure.

You can resume normal activities and any bandage can be removed within a few hours.

The biopsy site may be sore and tender for one to two days. You may take nonprescription pain medicine to relieve any discomfort.

## **Are there any risks in having a Thyroid FNA?**

There is a very small risk of developing a bruise or minor internal bleeding at the site of the aspiration. This does not normally require any treatment.