

Child health information factsheet

Kidney biopsy

A kidney biopsy is a procedure to remove a small piece of kidney tissue, which is then examined under a microscope. This is useful in helping to diagnose the problem and assessing how the kidneys are responding to treatment.

Before the biopsy

We will need to take a sample of your child's blood to check that their blood clots properly; this is necessary for the healing process. We also need to know their blood group, so that we can give the correct blood in the unlikely event that this is needed (about one in every 500 biopsies result in bleeding within the kidney). This procedure is done under a general anaesthetic (medicine given to make you go to sleep).

The day of the biopsy

Your child will not be allowed to have any food and milk for six hours before the biopsy, but they can have clear fluids up to two hours before. The admission letter should advise you on these times.

When you arrive on the ward (either John Atwell day ward or G4 nephro-urology) you will be met by a nurse who will show you around the ward. The nurse will ask you questions about your child's health and take his or her temperature, pulse, and blood pressure.



Your child will need to change into a theatre gown and remove all jewellery. You will meet your doctor who will ask you some more questions about your child's health, explain the procedure and ask you to sign a consent form. Please take this opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

You will also meet the anaesthetist who will discuss the best form of anaesthetic for your child and explain the need to put a cannula (small plastic tube) into the vein before or during the procedure.

Theatres will ring the ward when they are ready. One parent can go with your child and their nurse. When suitable you may go into the anaesthetic room until your child is asleep. Please note this is at the discretion of the anaesthetist and should be discussed beforehand. When the procedure is completed you may go with the nurse to collect your child.

After the biopsy

Once your child is back on the ward they will need to stay on strict bed rest for at least six hours. This helps to reduce the risk of bleeding.

Your nurse will check your child's pulse, blood pressure, temperature and breathing rate regularly, as well as checking the biopsy site.

It is quite common for your child's urine to look blood stained after a biopsy (about one in every ten children) but this should start to clear within two to three hours if your child is drinking enough. Please

Child health information factsheet

give all urine samples to your nurse. Sometimes, if your child is feeling sick and unable to drink, fluids may be given through the cannula.

Potential risks

- Some children may experience a little pain at the biopsy site. This can be managed with simple pain relief
- Bleeding within the kidney, we will monitor for this by regularly checking your child's pulse and blood pressure and checking and measuring the urine samples that your child produces
- Secondary to bleeding in the kidney, blood clots could form in the bladder preventing your child from passing urine. This is uncommon (about one in every 100 biopsies). We may need to treat this problem by putting a catheter in to empty the bladder and to flush the blood clots out
- Sometimes we are unable to get enough tissue to make an accurate diagnosis.

Going home

Your child will go home when their blood pressure, pulse and temperature have remained satisfactory for six hours after the biopsy. They must have passed urine three times and the doctor must be happy with the appearance of the urine.

An overnight stay is sometimes necessary.

The consultant will arrange to see you in the outpatient clinic about eight weeks after the biopsy to discuss the results.

When at home

- Keep the plaster, over the biopsy site, dry for a day after the procedure
- It is possible that your child may feel a little uncomfortable around the biopsy site for a couple of days. Treat this with paracetamol following the instructions on the packet, unless you have been instructed differently
- Your child should rest for a couple of days after the biopsy. We advise against strenuous exercise for one week.

Please call the ward if you have any concerns or if your child has the following:

- Blood stained urine
- The biopsy site is still painful more than three days after the biopsy and the pain relief is not helping
- Oozing from the biopsy site
- A high temperature.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact

The nursing staff on G4 nephrology: 023 8079 8620

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8079 4688 for help.