

## Endoscopy Unit

# Bronchoscopy: The Procedure Explained

The aim of this booklet is to help you make an informed decision about agreeing to the procedure and to help answer any questions that you may have. It also explains the diet you need to follow two days before your appointment.

## What is a Bronchoscopy?

A Bronchoscopy is a test which allows the doctor to look directly into the bronchial tubes of the lungs; this done by using a bronchoscope which is a fine flexible camera. It is usually inserted via your nostril, passes through your larynx (voice box), down your trachea and finally into your lungs. It does not affect your ability to breathe. If you have had nasal surgery or other nasal problems the bronchoscope will be passed through your mouth.

If samples need to be taken, you should not be able to feel it. You may however cough up a small amount of blood. This is completely normal and please do not worry.

## Why do I need it?

Your doctor has referred you for the procedure due to symptoms you have been suffering from. Your doctor may also want to view your airways following a long term infection or an abnormality on an x-ray or scan.

## Are there any risks?

A bronchoscopy is an invasive procedure; which can lead to complications. You have a slight risk of developing a throat or chest infection following the procedure. Rarely, a Bronchoscopy can cause damage to the lung. This is



## Patient Information

more likely to happen if a specialised biopsy of lung tissue is taken; this can sometimes collapse the lung. You are monitored by fully trained staff and there are 2 doctors present during your procedure.

### Are there are side effects?

Most procedures are done without any problem, but you need to be aware of the following:

- Your throat may be a little sore for a day or so afterwards.
- There is a slightly increased risk of developing a throat or chest infection following a bronchoscopy.
- Careful monitoring by a fully trained endoscopy nurse ensures that any potential problems can be identified and treated rapidly.
- Serious complications occur in around 1:1000 bronchoscopies and the overall risk of this happening is very small.
- If after discharge from the endoscopy unit you have any problems with worsening breathlessness or chest pain, please contact your GP immediately and tell them that you have had a Bronchoscopy.
- If you are unable to contact or speak to your doctor, you must go immediately to the hospital's Accident and Emergency Department.

### What about my medication?

Please continue to take your regular medication as prescribed, unless you are taking any of the following:

- **Anticoagulants** – Please contact the unit on 024 7696 6805 if you are taking blood thinning medications such as **Warfarin, Clopidogrel, Rivaroxaban, Apixaban, Edoxaban, Dabigatran, Prasugrel or Aspirin**
- **Diabetes** – if your diabetes is controlled with **insulin** or **oral medication**, please make sure you have received a diabetic information leaflet and that the Endoscopy Unit is aware. This is to ensure you are seen in a timely manner.

Please contact the unit if you have an allergy to Latex.

## Preparing for the procedure

Due to the nature of the procedure, we want you to have an empty stomach. Therefore, we need **you not to eat for at least six hours** before your appointment. You may have sips of water up to **two hours** before your appointment.

**If you have a morning appointment (before 12 noon) please follow these instructions:**

- Do not eat after **midnight**
- You may have a drink at **6am**

**If you have an afternoon appointment (after 12 noon) please follow these instructions:**

- You may have a light breakfast no later than **8am**
- You may have small sips of water until **two hours** before your appointment

## How long will I be in the Endoscopy Unit?

You should expect to be in the unit for around 3-4 hours. The unit may need to prioritise emergency patients from the wards and other departments.

The 3-4 hours also depends on how quickly you recover from the procedure, whether you have agreed to have any sedative medication and how busy the department is.

Please note that we do not allow children in the department so please make childcare arrangements or ask for your appointment to be rebooked.

## What happens when I arrive?

You will be checked in at reception where the receptionist will check your name, date of birth, address and confirm your arrangements for getting home. You will be given a patient wristband so that staff can safely identify you throughout your stay in Endoscopy Unit.

## Patient Information

A member of staff will then take you to an admission room where you will be asked to change into a hospital gown. They will do a brief medical assessment to make sure that you are fit to have the procedure. If you are diabetic, your blood glucose level is checked and documented. If you take anticoagulant medication, a finger prick test (INR) will also be carried out.

The nurse will make sure that you understand the procedure and answer any questions or concerns you may have. You will then be asked to sign a consent form.

A consent form is a legal document which confirms your agreement for a trained medical professional to carry out the procedure and your understanding of any associated risks. The doctor or nurse completing the form will explain the procedure to you, outlining the benefits and risks associated with the planned procedure. You may ask questions about the procedure or ask them to repeat or explain more if you do not understand.

You will then wait in your admission room or be taken to a waiting area until it is your turn.

### **Is it painful?**

You may feel some discomfort during the procedure. You will be offered the option of local anaesthetic throat spray or sedation.

### **Throat Spray**

The back of your throat is numbed using local anaesthetic spray. After the spray, you will feel a lump in the back of your throat and feel as though you are unable to swallow. This is completely normal and you are very safe. The effects last an hour after the initial spray, following this you are allowed to start eating and drinking as before.

### **Sedation**

If you choose to have sedation, the nurse will insert a small plastic tube (cannula) into the back of your hand or arm - this is used to administer the injection medication(s). If required during the procedure, a member of the team will administer more medication if deemed safe.

## Patient Information

After the procedure, you are not allowed to drive or use public transport, so you need to arrange a family member or friend to collect you. You should not drink alcohol, operate heavy machinery or sign legal documents for 24 hours after your procedure.

### **The Bronchoscopy procedure explained**

You are taken to the procedure room and introduced to the team, who go through safety checks and answer any last minute questions. You will be asked to remove any dentures to make sure they are not damaged. A blood pressure cuff and blood oxygen monitor is placed on your arm and finger to monitor you throughout. Oxygen is administered through a sponge in your nostril. The doctor will numb the inside of your nose and the back of your throat with local anaesthetic spray. You will then be given sedation by the doctor; you will feel drowsy and relaxed.

It is normal for saliva to collect in your mouth. This will be removed by a small suction tube similar to one used at the dentist.

The procedure then starts by the doctor inserting the bronchoscope into your nostril (or mouth) making its way in your lungs. The doctor will inspect the lining of your trachea and main bronchi (main airway). Once assessed, biopsies or samples may be taken by the doctor, if they are required. These are all done by one of the doctors. You should not be able to feel this, however it may be uncomfortable. Once the doctor has finished the bronchoscope is slowly removed.

Due to the nature of the procedure, you may cough up some blood. This is completely normal and please do not worry.

### **After the procedure**

You will be transferred to the recovery area where you will be monitored by a qualified nurse. You should expect to stay in the department until a safe discharge time is planned. If you are diabetic, your blood glucose will also be checked. Every patient is different. Once you have recovered sufficiently you will be moved into a chair and asked to get dressed. Your lift will be contacted to arrange collection. Before you leave, the nurse or endoscopist may discuss the findings of the procedure with you, and give you a discharge leaflet and a copy of your endoscopy report. They will also tell you of any further investigations or treatment you may need.

## Patient Information

If you normally suffer from memory problems, a family member or friend can be with you whilst you are being discharged.

You will be given specific information regarding eating and drinking before your discharge. This has been agreed by the endoscopist. Please follow the instructions to prevent complications when you get home.

### General points and information

- We aim for you to be seen and treated in a timely manner. However, emergency patients take priority and we apologise if this delays your appointment. You will be kept updated if this happens.
- You may want to bring a dressing gown and slippers with you.
- The hospital cannot accept responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property during your time on the premises.
- If you have any problems with persistent abdominal pain or bleeding, please contact your GP immediately informing them that you have an appointment with us.
- If you are unable to speak to your GP and your symptoms persist, you must attend Accident and Emergency immediately.
- If you require hospital transport for your appointment please contact hospital transport direct on 01926 310312.

### Further Information

If you need any more information or explanation, please contact the Endoscopy Unit on 024 7696 6805.

This booklet is based on information produced by the British Society of Gastroenterologists and has been adapted for UHCW NHS Trust by Sakina Lyall, Endoscopy Nurse. Dr Dhananjay Desai, Consultant Respiratory Physician. Joe Colby Lead Nurse for Gastroenterology.

[www.bsg.org.uk](http://www.bsg.org.uk)

## Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us on 024 7696 6805 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

To give feedback on this leaflet please email [feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk)

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