

Respiratory Care

Mediastinoscopy

Introduction

Following your consultation you will have been advised that a further investigation is required to help your doctor find the cause of your symptoms.

A mediastinoscopy is performed by a thoracic (chest) surgeon and will mean you will be admitted to hospital for 2 or more days. This investigation will require a general anaesthetic and therefore you will be asleep during the investigation.

What is a mediastinoscopy?

A mediastinoscopy is a procedure which allows the surgeon to look at the space inside the central part of your chest. This space contains your heart and major blood vessels as well as many glands. These glands are known as lymph nodes.

During the procedure, which will be performed in an operating theatre, a small cut is made at the front of your neck, just below the neckline. A camera is inserted along the windpipe to examine the lymph glands or nodes on the sides of the windpipe and centre of the chest (mediastinum.) The surgeon may take a biopsy (a small piece of tissue) from one of the lymph glands or nodes.

Please inform your Lung Nurse if you are taking Warfarin, Aspirin, Clopidogrel, Phenindione, Rivaroxaban, Dabigatran or any diabetic medication, or any other anti-coagulant or blood-thinning agents.

Admission to hospital

You will usually be admitted to hospital the day before the investigation. Information will be sent or given to you explaining what time to arrive and what to bring with you. Please note that it is advisable to leave valuables at home.

Complications

There are risks involved with any investigation and general anaesthetic. Your surgeon will explain and advise of any potential risks or complications before asking you to sign consent for the procedure.

On the day of the procedure

The nurse will tell you the last time you may eat or drink; this is usually about 4 hours before the procedure.



Patient Information

You will be asked to take a bath or shower, and dress in a theatre gown without any under-garments or jewellery, except wedding rings or religious bangles which will be taped.

Your bed will be prepared, clean and ready for theatre.

If you wear a hearing aid this can be left in until the last minute as you will be asked questions by the theatre staff and it will also help in waking you afterwards. Dentures and glasses will need to be removed before you leave the Ward for Theatre.

The nurse will ask you a list of questions to ensure your details and planned investigation is correct, i.e. name, address, date of birth. These questions will be repeated when the nurse checks you into the Theatre.

At the appropriate time, a member of theatre staff will collect you from the ward on your bed. A ward nurse will go with you and remain with you while you are 'checked in' by the theatre nurse. You will then be transferred to a theatre trolley and taken into the anaesthetic room.

Whilst in theatre you will be attached to a monitor to record your heart rhythm and rate, oxygen levels and blood pressure. A small needle will be placed into the back of your hand to administer any drugs.

While you are asleep 'drips' (bags of fluid) may be set up to flow into this needle.

After the procedure

When you return from theatre:

- You will be nursed in the 'step down' area on the ward;
- Your blood pressure, pulse and oxygen levels will be regularly monitored;
- A 'drip' may be attached to your arm for a short while;
- As soon as you are awake you will be allowed to have a drink.

Pain relief

You may experience some discomfort or pain following the procedure. In order for the staff to assess and treat your pain they will need to ask you to score the level of pain you have.

- 0 = No pain
- 1 = Mild pain
- 2 = Moderate pain
- 3 = Severe pain

Eating and drinking

As soon as you are fully awake you will be allowed to eat and drink as normal.

Wound care

The nursing staff will check that the wound is clean and dry.

Mobilising

As soon as you have recovered from the anaesthetic you will be encouraged to sit out of bed and begin to move about.

Patient Information

Results

The results of your investigation take approximately seven to ten days and during this time they will be discussed at the Lung Team Thursday morning meeting.

You will then receive an appointment to see your consultant so that the results can be discussed with you.

Further information

If you need any further information or clarification please contact the Lung Support Nurse Team on 024 7696 5505.

We would like to express our thanks to the Consultants, Surgeons, patients and their relatives for helping to compile this information booklet.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 5505 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Document History

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