

Maxillofacial Department

Minor Salivary Gland Biopsy

Your Rheumatologist or surgeon has recommended that you have a biopsy of your labial (lower lip) salivary gland to help diagnose your condition.

What is a minor salivary gland biopsy?

A minor salivary gland biopsy is a procedure where an incision is made within the lower lip **inside** the mouth. A few minor salivary glands which lie just below the surface are plucked out to be examined under a microscope. It is a relatively minor and safe procedure.

A local anaesthetic injection is used to numb the area which takes a couple of minutes to work. After this injection, the procedure is painless. An incision is made in the lower lip, a few minor salivary glands are sampled and the incision is closed with stitches which will dissolve after 10 -14 days. The procedure usually takes around 15 - 20 minutes from start to finish.

Is there much soreness afterwards?

When the anaesthetic wears off, there will be some pain or discomfort. Simple painkillers are usually effective. You will be advised which are the best to take. Any discomfort usually only lasts a few days.

Will there be much bleeding?

Although there may be a little bleeding at the time of the biopsy, this usually stops very quickly and is unlikely to be a problem because the wound is stitched.



Patient Information

When you get home, should the biopsy site bleed again, apply pressure over the area for at least 10 minutes with a clean damp rolled up handkerchief or swab (if you have been given one). This should stop the bleeding but if the bleeding continues please contact Clinic 11 on 024 7696 6500 during office hours. Out of hours please contact University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire on 024 7696 4000, and request the Maxillofacial Senior House Officer on call.

When can I return to work?

This largely depends on your job and how you feel after the procedure. Most people are able to return to work later the same day.

Swelling

There may be a small area of lip swelling afterwards. To reduce the degree of swelling, in the first few hours after your operation you should avoid:

- Alcohol
- Exercise
- Hot foods / drinks

Scarring at biopsy site

Any cut to soft tissues produces a scar. This softens and virtually disappears with time. It can however feel quite obvious and lumpy to begin with. The scarring can also be dependent on the size of the biopsy and the individual's tendency to scarring.

Localised area of numbness

The biopsy can affect the local nerves resulting in areas of numbness. These can take several months before normal feeling returns.

Will I need another appointment?

A follow-up appointment is not always necessary but you may be asked to attend an appointment for the results of the biopsy to be discussed with you. A care advice leaflet will be given to you after the biopsy.

Patient Information

Depending on what the biopsy results are, we will determine whether further treatment is required.

Further Information

If you require any further information, please contact the Maxillofacial Department on 024 7696 6456.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6500 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Document History

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