Ultrasound Guided Needle Biopsy

An ultrasound guided needle biopsy is a medical test used to learn more about a lesion or mass. The biopsy is done using an ultrasound to find the lesion or mass. This is one type of "image-guided" biopsy, which combines the use of ultrasound with either a fine needle aspiration or a core needle biopsy.

When are ultrasound guided needle biopsies used?

Ultrasound guided needle biopsies are most often used for:

- Lymph nodes.
- Breast.
- Liver.

This test can also be used with endoscopy or bronchoscopy when tumors are within the GI tract or the lungs. These are known as endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) or endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS).

How do I prepare for an ultrasound guided needle biopsy?

No preparation is needed for this test. However, if you are on blood thinners or take aspirin your provider may have you stop taking them for a few days before the test. Your provider will give you instructions to prepare for the EUS or EBUS if you are having one.

How is this test done?

Local anesthesia, such as lidocaine (numbing medication), will be used to numb the area. An ultrasound is done to find the test area and is used to guide the needle into the mass or lesion. The needle removes tissue for testing. The actual insertion and removal of the needle takes a few minutes, but the whole procedure takes about 30 minutes.

What to expect after the test?

As the numbing medication wears off, you may have some discomfort. You may have bruising, swelling, or a small amount of bleeding at the site of the biopsy.

In some cases, a pocket of blood, or a hematoma, will collect at the site of the biopsy. This can be uncomfortable but should get better over the next few days. If there is severe pain, you should call your provider right away.

How do you receive the results of your ultrasound guided needle biopsy?

The tissue sample is reviewed by a pathologist and a report is written. The report will give your provider information about normal and not normal findings. Your provider will discuss your results with you.