

INFORMATION AND PREPARATION SHEET

FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION (FNA) OR CORE BIOPSY ULTRASOUND SCAN

This information leaflet will explain what an FNA/core biopsy is and why you have been sent for one. Please read this leaflet carefully. If you have any questions or concerns not answered by this leaflet, please contact the Ultrasound department (details at the end of this leaflet).

What is a Fine Needle Aspiration and why is it performed?

A fine needle aspiration is most commonly performed on the thyroid, neck, axilla and more superficial parts of the body, however an aspiration can be performed anywhere in the body. A small sample of tissue is removed from the area via a small (fine) needle. The FNA is carried out to try and determine the cause of a lump or swelling. In order to obtain the sample, some gel will be applied to the skin surface and a small ultrasound probe placed in contact with the gel. The fine needle will then be placed beside the probe and guided through the skin surface to the lump or swelling. This will sometimes be done under local anaesthetic.

Who carries out the examination?

The FNA is carried out by a radiologist or specialist sonographer. Another sonographer or senior nursing assistant may assist during the procedure.

What are the benefits of having an Ultrasound guided Fine Needle Aspiration?

Ultrasound captures images of the organs and tissue that don't show up well on X-rays. You are not exposed to ionising radiation, so ultrasound is safer than X-rays and CT. The needle is guided by the ultrasound image to ensure a sample is taken from the correct area and an accurate diagnosis can be made.

What are the risks?

The risks are small and include some bleeding / bruising within the area of fine needle aspiration or the less likely possibility of infection.

To reduce the risk of infection by non-sterile ultrasound gel products, remove all residual gel from your skin after the procedure, and wash area when able to do so.

Are there any alternatives?

Your referrer has decided that an ultrasound guided aspiration would be the most useful in your case. The examination will help your referrer to assess you more fully and plan any further treatment that might be necessary. If you would like more information about alternative imaging tests, please speak to the doctor or health care professional managing your care.

What happens on the day of your procedure?

No specific preparation is required, except that you should let your referring doctor know if you are taking any blood thinning agents, particularly warfarin. The doctor may have asked you this already at the time of referring you.

We will endeavour to start at your appointed time, although this may not always be possible on a busy list.

It is not mandatory that you have someone accompanying you, but it can be beneficial. They will generally be asked to remain in the ultrasound waiting area whilst you have the procedure carried out.

Asking for your consent

The radiologist or specialist sonographer will ask you if you are happy for the scan to go ahead. This is called verbal consent. If you do not wish to have the scan or are undecided, please tell the radiologist/specialist sonographer. Students/trainees may be present during the examination but only with your verbal consent.

Please remember that you can ask the radiologist/specialist sonographer any questions you have at any time before, during or after your scan.

Will I feel any pain?

The procedure can be a little uncomfortable, but the radiologist/specialist sonographer may use local anaesthetic to numb the area which will help reduce discomfort. Several samples may be required for a complete analysis, but we generally do not do more than 3 or 4 samples at any one attendance.

What happens during the FNA?

- It is usually not necessary to undress for the procedure, however sometimes you may be asked to put on a gown if the area being scanned is not easily accessed.
- You will be initially scanned with the ultrasound machine so the radiologist/specialist sonographer can confirm the nature of the swelling and that it is suitable for FNA.
- If it is confirmed that an FNA is to be performed, you may have to wait approx. 10 minutes for the cytopathologist to arrive.
- Prior to the FNA, the radiologist/specialist sonographer performing the procedure will explain everything that is going to happen to you, including the potential risks.
- You will usually be asked to lie on the couch flat and may need to turn or be repositioned depending on the area to be examined.
- The skin of the relevant area will be cleaned with a sterile wipe or sponge.
- The area may be numbed with a local anaesthetic.

- The ultrasound machine will then be used to guide a fine needle into the swelling so that an aspirate can be performed.
- The procedure is usually completed in less than 30 minutes, however you may be in the department for up to an hour altogether.
- The radiologist/specialist sonographer or referring clinician may decide they would like a slightly bigger sample and in this case a core biopsy will be undertaken instead of an FNA. It is done the same way using a slightly larger needle that makes a clicking sound. The radiologist/specialist sonographer will explain if this is necessary and will ask for your consent.

What happens after your FNA/core biopsy?

As long as you are feeling well, you will be free to return to your normal activities, including driving or working. You should take any medications as normal.

Some mild swelling or discomfort may occur at the aspiration site and, if necessary, you can take simple analgesia for this, such as paracetamol. An icepack to the area may also give symptomatic relief and reduce swelling. Very rarely, more severe pain, swelling or redness to the area may occur and you should contact your own doctor for further advice. Exceedingly rarely, new difficulty with breathing can occur and may require attendance at the Emergency Department.

If you have been on blood thinning agents and stopped it for the procedure, please recommence it as per instructions from your referring clinician.

If you have any further queries with regard to this procedure, please contact the Ultrasound Department.

When will I get the FNA/core biopsy results?

The samples taken are delivered to the Pathology Department and examined by a Consultant Cytopathologist. The length of time it takes for a result can be up to 2 weeks. This result is then sent to the doctor that referred you to the Ultrasound Department for the FNA in the first place and they will convey the result to you via telephone, letter or face to face at a clinic appointment.

Image sharing

Your images will be electronically stored on the hospital picture archiving system. This data can be accessed throughout the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and other doctors and health care professionals who are directly involved in your care. The ability to share images and radiological reports will improve the safety and quality of your care by ensuring that the right information is available in the right place at the right time.

In order to improve the medical services we provide we may also use your data as anonymously as possible for internal audit and medical education. If you would prefer that your data is not used for these purposes, please inform a member of staff when you attend for your examination.

If your data is to be used for research, then a separate consent process will be used. You will be asked for your consent, should this be the case.

Contact us

If you have any queries with regard to this procedure, please contact the Ultrasound Department where your appointment has been scheduled:

Lorimer Suite, BCH: 028 950 40794

Imaging Centre, RVH: 028 961 50971

Feedback

We hope you found the information in this leaflet helpful. If it did not tell you what you needed to know or you would like to provide any feedback on your experience please let us know so that we can make any necessary improvements.

You can provide feedback on your experience:

Telephone: **028 9504 8000** (Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm)

Textphone: **18001 028 950 48000**

By email: compliments@belfasttrust.hscni.net

By email: complaints@belfasttrust.hscni.net

By completing an online form:

<http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/contact/FeedbackForm.htm>



Care Opinion

We invite you to share your experience by clicking the following link:

<https://www.careopinion.org.uk/>

or by scanning the following QR code on your smartphone or tablet:



Language and accessible support services

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

If a Sign Language interpreter is required, please either telephone **028 9615 8900** via the Sign Video remote interpreting service (<https://signvideo.co.uk/deaf-community/>) or email us at MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net and we will arrange one for your appointment. Please have your H&C number ready when calling or include it in your email. This can be found at the top right corner of any Health and Social Care letters you may have received.

If you are unable to hear on the phone and need to contact us with regards to your appointment you can email us at MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net.

Do you need this information in another format or language?

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, including Braille, large print, CD, audio tape please contact the telephone number **028 9615 8900** or e-mail address **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net**, and we will do our best to meet your needs.

Polish - Czy potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym formacie lub języku?

Fundusz ma dostęp do usług w zakresie tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych. Jeśli potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym języku lub formacie, w tym w piśmie Braille'a, dużym druku, na płycie CD, kasecie magnetofonowej, skontaktuj się z nami pod numerem telefonu lub adresem e-mail **028 9615 8900 / MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net**, a my dołożymy wszelkich starań, aby spełnić Twoje potrzeby.

Arabic - هل تحتاج هذه المعلومات بصيغة أو بلغة أخرى؟

تستطيع الجمعية توفير خدمات الترجمة الفورية والتحريرية. إذا احتجت هذه المعلومات بلغة أو بصيغة أخرى، بما فيها صيغة برايل Braille أو صيغة بالأحرف الكبيرة، أو في سي دي CD أو في شريط مسموع، يُرجى الاتصال برقم التليفون أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900**، وسوف نبذل قصارى جهدنا في تلبية احتياجاتك.

Lithuanian - Ar jums reikia šios informacijos kitu formatu ar kalba?

Tarnyba gali suteikti vertimo žodžiu ir raštu paslaugas. Jei reikia šios informacijos kita kalba ar formatu, įskaitant Brailio raštą, didelį šriftą, kompaktinį diską, garso įrašą, skambinkite telefonu arba susisiekite el. paštu **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900** ir mes padarysime viską, kad patenkintume jūsų poreikius.

Romanian - Aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-un alt format sau altă limbă?

Trustul are acces la servicii de interpretariat și traducere. Dacă aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-o altă limbă sau într-un alt format, inclusiv Braille, tipărire cu caractere de mari dimensiuni, CD, înregistrare audio, atunci vă rugăm să ne contactați la numărul de telefon sau la adresa de e-mail **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900**, iar noi vom face tot posibilul pentru satisfacerea necesităților dumneavoastră.

Tetum - Ita presiza atu informasaun ida ne'e iha formatu ka lian seluk ka lae?

Fidusiáriu ida ne'e iha asesu ba servisu durubasa no tradusaun. Se Ita presiza informasaun ida ne'e iha lian ka formatu seluk, inklui letra Braile, letra boot, CD, kasete audio, entaun favór telefone númeru ka enderesu e-mail **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900**, no ami sei halo esforsu tomak atu kumpre Ita-nia nesesidade sira.