

Patient information

Biopsy of the Mouth

Liverpool University Dental Hospital

What is a biopsy?

You have just been told you need a biopsy. This involves the removal of a small amount of tissue, which can then be examined using a microscope.

Why are they performed?

Biopsies are minor surgical procedures. They are commonly used to confirm the diagnosis of a wide range of conditions, which can affect the mouth and the lips. The results of your biopsy will help us select the best treatment for you.

About the procedure

It is a quick and painless procedure, which usually takes ten to fifteen minutes.

What anaesthetic will I be given?

Your biopsy will be carried out under local anaesthesia so please have your normal meals beforehand. The local anaesthetic will be injected into part of your mouth so it goes numb. It may be given by an anaesthetist, surgeon or other healthcare professional, depending on the technique used.

Like all medicines, local anaesthetics may sometimes cause side effects, as well as the effects that are needed. You may experience dizziness, blurred vision, drowsiness and occasionally loss of consciousness.

Serious side effects are rare, and include fits, low blood pressure, slowed breathing and changes in heartbeat, which may be life-threatening. If you have concerns about any of these effects you should discuss them with your dentist.

You should still continue to take any medication you have prescribed unless told otherwise by your doctor or dentist.

In most cases, the biopsy site will be sutured (stitched). Sometimes a pack is placed to protect the biopsy area. The sutures are usually made from a reabsorbable (dissolvable) material, which means they will not need to be removed.

After the biopsy - what to expect

You may have:

- Soreness after the local anaesthetic wears off.
- Slight swelling for 24-48 hours after the biopsy.
- Discomfort when chewing / speaking for a few days (especially if having a tongue biopsy).
- Slight oozing of blood may happen, don't worry this is normal.
- A small amount of bruising.

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Take Paracetamol or whatever you would normally take if you experience any discomfort. **Do not take aspirin.**
- Avoid hard foods and hot drinks for the next few hours.
- Avoid smoking and alcohol for the rest of the day.
- Take it easy for the rest of the day.
- Start a hot salty mouthwash after 24 hours and continue to do so every few hours especially after meals.
- Apply pressure to biopsy area with a cotton handkerchief (not tissue), if bleeding happens.

Do not:

- Bite your cheeks or tongue if they still feel numb.
- Mouth rinse for the first 24 hours.
- Brush your teeth around the biopsy area for the next 24 hours.

If you have any further questions please see one of the clinical staff.

Your Review Appointment

At your follow-up visit we will inform you of the results of the biopsy.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your Outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated

Further information

If you experience any problems following your biopsy, please contact:

The Oral Medicine Department

Tel: 0151 706 5097

Textphone number: 18001 0151 706 5090

Or The Oral Surgery Department

Tel: 0151 706 5092

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 5092

(9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday)

NHS 111

Tel: 111

If you experience any urgent postoperative difficulty on a Saturday, Sunday or after 5.00 pm on a weekday, please contact the NHS helpline by telephoning 111.

Depending on your situation, the NHS 111 team can connect you to a nurse, emergency dentist or even a GP and can arrange face-to-face appointments if they think you need one.

Author: Oral Medicine Department

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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زانیاری پتومندیدار بهو نهخوشانهی له لایمن تراستهوه پسهمند کراون، نهگس داوا بکرنیت له فورماتمهکانی تردا بریتی له زمانهکانی تر، نیزی رید (هاسان خویندنهوه)، چاپی گموره، شریتی دهنک، هیلی موون و ئلیکترونیکي همیه.

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