

Patient information

Pleural Clinic

Respiratory Department

Pleural effusion:

You have been referred to this clinic for further investigations for fluid which may be between the linings of your lungs. The medical name for this is a pleural effusion.

Before you arrive:

On the morning of your clinic appointment there is no special preparation. You can eat and drink as normal. You should take all of your usual medications.

If you are on any medicines to thin your blood please let your doctor know and arrangements can be made so that your blood is not too thin.

You may be asked to attend for blood tests prior to your appointment – this will be arranged by the team looking after you.

When you arrive in hospital:

On the day of your pleural clinic appointment, you will be asked to attend the Treatment Room outside the doors to ward 7B. Here staff will check your observations - this is your blood pressure, breathing rate, temperature, heart rate and the oxygen level in your blood.

In the treatment room we will use an ultrasound machine to identify if there is fluid in your lung linings. We will then discuss with you the next steps that can be taken.

Ultrasound scan:

This enables the doctor or nurse to "look" through the chest wall. There are no known risks to ultrasound, and it is painless and non-invasive. A cool gel is used on the skin so we can see a good picture. An ultrasound scan must be completed to confirm if fluid is trapped between the linings of your lungs.

What can happen next?

If it is safe to do so we can drain any fluid we find. Samples of fluid can then be sent to the laboratory for testing. By testing this fluid we can help find a reason for the fluid having developed in your lungs.

We have different ways of taking the sample of fluid and we will explain these to you after your ultrasound scan. We will only take a sample of fluid if you agree to us doing so and if it is safe to do so

If we do feel that a procedure is necessary we will explain all of this to you and provide you with further relevant information.

If we do take a sample of fluid from your chest you may be asked to stay for an hour after the procedure. Staff will check all of your observations again before you go home. If we do not take any fluid you can go home after your ultra sound scan.

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

Royal Liverpool Hospital main switchboard

Tel: 0151 706 2000

Text phone number: 1800 0151 706 2000

Pleural Specialist Nurse

Tel: 0151 706 2000, bleep 4510

British Lung Foundation

Phone 0300 030 555 (local rate) (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)

www.blf.org.uk

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk

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