
Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Oral (mouth) biopsy

This leaflet has been designed to improve your understanding of any forthcoming treatment and contains answers to many of the commonly asked questions. If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer or would like further explanation please ask your surgeon.

What is a biopsy?

A biopsy is a procedure where a small piece of tissue is removed from an area so that it can be looked at closely under a microscope.

Excision biopsy: The biopsy may aim to remove an area completely. This is usually only appropriate for small lumps or swellings.

Incisional biopsy: Occasionally only a small piece of an abnormal area is removed to confirm a diagnosis.

How is it done?

- In most cases biopsies are carried out under local anaesthesia (an injection into the area to numb it). The injection takes a couple of minutes to work and means that the biopsy will be painless.
- The biopsy usually leaves a small hole that often requires stitching.
- In the majority of cases the stitches used are dissolvable and take around two weeks to disappear.
- The whole process (local anaesthetic injection, biopsy and stitching) usually takes around 15 to 30 minutes.

Is there much soreness or swelling afterwards?

When the local anaesthetic wears off after a few hours there is a little in the way of pain and swelling. Occasionally it is necessary to take simple painkillers (such as Paracetamol, Nurofen). Usually any discomfort only lasts a few days.

Will there be much bleeding?

Although there may be a little bleeding at the time of the biopsy, it usually stops very quickly and is unlikely to be a problem if the wound is stitched. Should the biopsy site bleed again when you get home this can usually be stopped by applying pressure over the area for at least 10 minutes with a rolled up handkerchief or swab. If the bleeding

does not stop please contact the hospital on 01223 245151 and ask for the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon 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.

Are there any things I should do when I get home?

- Be careful not to bite numb areas of your mouth.
- On the day of surgery you should avoid rinsing your mouth out vigorously as this may cause bleeding.
- You should clean your teeth normally, including those teeth next to the site of the biopsy.
- If you find that food catches around the stitches then the area can be gently rinsed with a mouthwash or warm salt water (dissolve a teaspoon of kitchen salt in a cup of warm water) commencing on the day after surgery.

Will I need another appointment?

Since the stitches are dissolvable a review appointment is not always necessary but you will usually be given one so that the results of the biopsy can be discussed with you. If no follow up appointment is arranged we will write to you with the results.

Adapted from:

British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.

<http://www.baoms.org.uk/>



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Polish

Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem Informacji Pacjenta (Patient Information) pod numerem telefonu: 01223 216032 lub pod adresem patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Portuguese

Se precisar desta informação noutra língua, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio, por favor peça ao departamento que contacte a secção de Informação aos Doentes (Patient Information) pelo telefone 01223 216032 ou através do e-mail patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Arabic

إذا كنت تود الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، بالأحرف الكبيرة أو بشكل شريط صوتي، يمكنك أن تطلب من القسم الاتصال بمعلومات المريض على الرقم: 01223216032 أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Cantonese

如您需以另一語言版本、特大字體或錄音形式索取本資料，請要求部門聯絡病人諮詢服務：電話 01223 216032，電郵地址 patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Turkish

Eğer bu bilgileri başka bir dilde veya büyük baskılı veya sesli olarak isterseniz, lütfen bulunduğunuz bölümdeki görevlilere söyleyin Hasta Bilgilendirme servisini arasinlar: 01223 216032 veya patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Urdu

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دیگر زبان میں، بڑے الفاظ میں یا آڈیو طریقہ سے درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس شعبہ سے پیشینٹ انفارمیشن سے ذیل کے ذریعہ رابطہ کرنے کی درخواست کریں: 01223 216032 یا patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Bengali

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য অন্য কোন ভাষায়, বড় অক্ষরে বা অডিও রেকর্ডিং পেতে চান তাহলে 'প্যাশেন্ট ইনফরমেশান' এর সঙ্গে 01223 216032 নম্বরে ফোন করে বা patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল করে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য ডিপার্টমেন্টটিতে অনুরোধ জানান।

Document history

Authors	Mr David Adlam
Department	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ www.cuh.org.uk
Contact number	01223 216635
Publish/Review date	February 2010/February 2013
File name	Mouth_biopsy
Version number/Ref	3/PIN0690