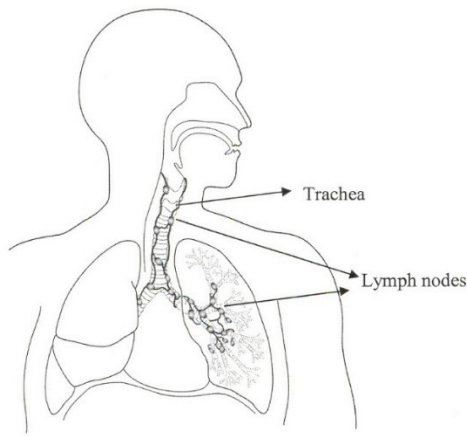


Mediastinoscopy

Mediastinoscopy is a surgery that helps find the cause of swollen lymph nodes. The surgery can help us find signs of infection, swelling, or cancer.

During the surgery, the surgeon explores the area called the mediastinum. This is the upper chest area between and in front of the lungs including:

- Heart and large blood vessels
- Trachea (windpipe)
- Esophagus (feeding tube)
- Bronchi (airways to the lungs)
- Lymph nodes



During Surgery

During surgery, you will be asleep (under general anesthesia). Your care team will place a tube in your throat to keep your airway open and help you breathe. Your surgeon will then make a small cut (incision) in the upper left chest just above your left collar bone (clavicle). Then, your surgeon will place a small camera through this cut and into the mediastinum.

We will remove small pieces of your tissue (biopsies) and send them to the lab. In the lab, they will look at the biopsies under a microscope to look for inflammation, infection, or cancer. Once the biopsy is taken, we will remove the camera and the tube in your throat. The surgery usually takes 1 to 2 hours.

After Surgery

Staff will take you to a recovery room. They will watch you for 2-4 hours as the anesthesia wears off. Most patients go home the same day, but some may need to stay overnight.

Home Care

You may have sutures (stitches), staples, or small steri-strips (small band aids) closing your skin. Steri-strips are used to keep the skin together and will fall off in 5-7 days.

Bathing

You may shower as normal. **Do not** bathe or swim for 10-14 or until the cut is healed.

Pain

You may have some discomfort or pain where the cut was placed. You can use acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin®, Advil®) to help with pain. Call if the pain doesn't go away.

Activity Restrictions

You will be able to return to work in a week. **Do not** lift more than 10-15 lbs. for the first 1-2 weeks.

When to Call

Call the clinic if you notice:

- Bleeding from your incision
- A fever over 100.4°F
- Severe chest pain
- Swelling in the neck or at the incision
- Shortness of breath
- Trouble swallowing
- Hoarseness of your voice that lasts more than a few days or keeps getting worse

Who to Call

If you have questions, please contact your provider through MyChart or call your provider listed in your After Visit Summary or After Hospital Care Plan. For a list of UW Health Clinics, visit www.uwhealth.org/.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 4/2026. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#6262.