

Paracentesis in Ultrasound

Your doctor has scheduled a paracentesis to be done on _____ at _____ () am, () pm.

Please report to the G3/3 Radiology desk (Atrium elevators to the 3rd floor). Before the test, our doctors will explain what will happen, answer any questions, and ask you to sign a consent form.

Paracentesis

Your doctor has found that you have fluid in your abdomen. This could have many causes. We perform a paracentesis by placing a needle or thin, plastic tube into the abdomen to remove the fluid. Taking out the fluid will help you feel better. We will also send the fluid for testing.

Common reasons for a paracentesis include:

- Recent fluid build-up with no clear cause.
- Trying to diagnose an infection.
- Removing fluid to help you feel better and breathe easier.

Getting Ready

You need to have blood work done first to test how well your blood clots. You can do this the day of the test. Please have all outside lab work faxed to the Ultrasound Clinical Program Coordinator at **(608) 261-5634**. The blood work should include a platelet count and an INR.

Please tell us if you take any medicines that thin your blood such as warfarin, Plavix[®], Pradaxa[®], Effient[®], etc. You will need to stop any injectable blood thinners for some time before and after the test. Talk to your doctor before stopping any medicine.

Tell us if you have allergies to latex or medicines.

What to Expect

The doctor uses an ultrasound (a machine that sends sound waves through the skin and creates images on a TV screen) to locate the fluid. The doctor will clean the skin with soap.

We inject some numbing medicine under the skin. A small needle/catheter system like an IV, but larger, is inserted into the fluid. The fluid is drained out through the tube with a syringe or suction device.

After the numbing medicine wears off, you may feel some pain at the site. It should not be severe, but you may feel sore. We will not prescribe any pain medicines. If you have any pain, we suggest you use Tylenol[®] or ibuprofen. The pain should go away within the 24 hours.

Activity

You can go back to your normal routine, as you feel able. You should call your local doctor if you begin to have symptoms of fluid build-up again. Sometimes the fluid will build up again, and you may need to repeat the paracentesis.

When to Call

- If you feel dizzy, faint, or light-headed.
- If your pain around the site gets worse 2-3 days later.
- If you are not feeling well and have a fever over 100.4° F (38° C).
- If you have redness and swelling around the site.

Who to Call

If you have questions or concerns about your procedure, please call **1-800-323-8942**.

Tell the operator you were seen in Ultrasound. The operator will then connect you to someone who can help.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

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 © 12/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#6375.