

Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy

You have many lymph nodes in several places in your body. They help fight infection and disease. Cancer cells may travel to the lymph nodes. The **Sentinel Lymph Node(s)** are the first that cancer cells may spread to. To remove, a biopsy is done. Results are told to your doctor and this will help to plan treatment for your cancer.

What is Lymphoscintigraphy?

This is the test done to trace the path of drainage from a tumor to the Sentinel Lymph node(s). This test is done the same day or the day before your surgery to help the surgeon find the sentinel lymph nodes.

How is the Lymphoscintigraphy test done?

- You will be taken to Nuclear Medicine to have the test done.
- You are given an injection of a radioactive tracer near the site of the tumor.
- The area can be numbed with some ice prior to the injection to help decrease pain.
- An image is then done to trace the path of the radioactive tracer.

What to expect from the surgery?

- Your surgeon may inject a blue dye in the area of your cancer. This also helps to find the lymph nodes that need to be removed.
- You will have an incision in the area where the lymph node(s) are removed. If removable stitches are used they will be taken out about 1 week after surgery. You may have stitches that dissolve and surgical glue or tapes (steri-strips).
- 24 hours after surgery, you can wash the incisions gently with soap and water and pat dry. If you have steri-strips leave them in place, it is okay if they get wet in the shower.
- If a blue dye was used your urine may be blue-green in color for about 24 hours.

When to call your doctor?

Please call if you notice:

- Bleeding that soaks the gauze dressing in 10 minutes or less and continues to soak dressings for one hour
- Pain not relieved by pain medicine
- Any signs of infection:
 - Redness
 - Tenderness
 - Swelling
 - Pus-like drainage
 - Warmth at the incision site
 - Fever over 100.5 for 2 readings 4 hours apart

Phone Numbers

If you have questions or problems once you are home, please call: ENT clinic at **(608) 263-6190** weekdays from 8:00-5:00. The clinic RN will return your call.

After 5:00 p.m. and weekends, the paging operator answers the clinic number. Ask for the ENT doctor on call. Leave your name, area-code and phone number. The doctor will call you back.

If you live out of the area please call **1-800-323-8942**.

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 © 3/2018. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7312.