



Dr Alison Graver MBBS FRACP
Nephrologist, Provider 459377CK

Suite 7, 210 Burgundy Street
Heidelberg VIC 3084

Phone: 03 9008 4077

Fax: 03 7049 4004

Email: admin@kidneymed.au

Kidney Biopsy Patient Information

This document will explain what to expect when having a kidney biopsy.

This document should not replace the advice of your relevant health care professional.

What is a kidney biopsy?

A kidney biopsy is a test to find out why your kidneys aren't working as well as they should.

If you have had a kidney transplant, a biopsy can show if the kidney is being rejected, or the anti-rejection drugs are causing damage.

What are the risks?

The main risk associated with a kidney biopsy is bleeding from the kidney. This and other risks will be discussed with you in depth before your procedure. Usually bleeding stops by itself, but about 1/1000 biopsies have severe pain and bleeding, requiring urgent treatment.

Your nurse will take your blood pressure and pulse frequently, and check your urine for bleeding.

Minor complications like bruising or pain at the biopsy site are more common but are usually relieved with pain relief such as paracetamol.

Before your kidney biopsy

Medications

You can take your usual medications EXCEPT medications to thin your blood (for example Warfarin, Xarelto, Eliquis). You will be given a specific plan regarding when to stop these medications, if you take them. The procedure will need to be cancelled if you have continued to take blood thinners.

If you have diabetes and use insulin or other medications you will be given a specific plan for these.

It is important to take all other medications as normal, including blood pressure medications.

Nutrition

You need to fast before the biopsy – no food after midnight, and no liquids after 6am.

Medical / nursing

Blood tests will be taken in the lead up to your biopsy to make sure your blood clots normally. The doctor will check this before the procedure to make sure it is at a safe level to continue.

On the day of your kidney biopsy

A kidney biopsy requires admission to hospital. On arrival, the nurse will check your vital signs. If your blood pressure is high, we may treat this with medication to reduce the risk of bleeding.

During your kidney biopsy

During the biopsy you will be awake. The doctor will explain the procedure to you and local anaesthetic will be used to numb the area of biopsy. A biopsy needle is used to take a very small sample of the kidney for testing. The doctor might need to take more than one sample. The procedure takes 30-60 minutes.

After your kidney biopsy

After the biopsy, you will need to spend 6 hours in bed - 4 hours lying on your back, then 2 hours sitting up – to reduce the risk of bleeding. Your vital signs will be checked frequently. There will also be frequent checks for bleeding at the biopsy site and in the urine. Your nurse will give you pain relief as required. Once 6 hours has passed, you can get out of bed.

Dressings & wound care

You will have a dressing on the biopsy site, which your nurse will check frequently for signs of bleeding. You can remove this dressing 24 hours after your procedure. Occasionally you may experience further ooze from the site; if this occurs apply a dry dressing.

Going home after your kidney biopsy

IF you experience any of the following:

- Faintness or dizziness
- Swelling, bleeding or severe pain at the biopsy site
- Swelling in your abdomen
- Blood in your urine or passing less urine than usual

Contact Dr Graver or your Kidney Specialist immediately. If unable to contact them, go straight to your closest Emergency Department.

Getting home

You may stay in hospital overnight and go home the next morning. Alternatively, you may be discharged home after 6 hours if you have someone to drive you and stay with you. You cannot drive yourself home on the day of the biopsy.

Comfort & pain

You may take simple, over-the-counter pain relief as required.

Do **NOT** take aspirin or any medications that contain aspirin - they may cause bleeding.

If you were asked to stop any tablets before the biopsy, ask your Kidney Specialist when you can safely start taking them again.

Activity

You must rest for 1-2 days after the biopsy. Return to your normal activities gradually over the next week. Avoid strenuous physical activity for one week after your biopsy. This includes sexual activity, sports and lifting/carrying heavy weights.

Follow up

It is important that you have a follow up appointment with your Kidney Specialist within 2-3 weeks to discuss your biopsy result and treatment plan.