

## *Having a Bronchoscopy*

If you have any questions prior to your procedure please ring on 0207-460-5605

### *Before you arrive*

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If you are taking any blood thinning tablets (eg: clopidogrel, warfarin) please consult your doctor or ring the Endoscopy department for advice.

If you are diabetic please let us know.

It is essential that you have nothing to eat for 6 hours and only clear fluids up until 2 hours before the procedure.

Unless you have been advised otherwise you should take your usual medicines normally (with a few sips of water)

We strongly recommend that someone collects you after the procedure.

### *Consent*

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The Consultant must by law obtain your consent to treatment beforehand. He will explain all the risks involved, benefits and alternatives before asking you to sign a consent form.

### *What is a Bronchoscopy*

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A Bronchoscopy is a procedure to look inside your airways. It is done using a flexible tube called a bronchoscope. Your doctor will pass the scope through your mouth or nose down past your voice box (larynx), down the windpipe (trachea), and into your lungs. A flexible telescope at the end of the tube will then be used to look at the airways of your lungs. Bronchoscopy is also used to check for certain conditions including lung cancer and any other unusual symptoms.

Bronchoscopy can help to find out what is causing symptoms such as:

- persistent cough
- coughing of blood
- recurrent bronchitis
- breathlessness
- hoarseness and change in voice
- an unusual chest infection
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During the examination, your doctor may need to take a biopsy (small sample of tissue) of your lungs. The doctor may also take a sample of liquid for analysis.

If you are given a sedative, you are advised to arrange somebody to take you home. The effect of the sedation will stay in your body for up to 24 hours. During this period, although you may feel wide awake, your coordination may not be as good as usual and you may feel light headed or faint. For this reason you must

- not drive a car or ride a bicycle
- not operate any machinery

be more careful when using electrical appliances

not drink alcohol for remainder of the day

not sign any important or legal document

## *During the procedure*

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You will need to sit up on a couch. You will be given oxygen through your nose and a small sensor will be placed on your finger to monitor your oxygen levels. Your doctor will give you a local anaesthetic by spraying the inside of your nose and the back of your throat to numb the area. A small plastic tube will be inserted in your vein at the back of your hand. The sedatives will be given through this. The sedation is not as strong as the general anaesthetic but it will make you feel more calm and relaxed.

Your doctor will pass the scope gently into your lung. This will feel slightly uncomfortable. The scope will pass gently through the mouth, this may make you cough slightly but your throat will soon relax.

Your doctor will put a solution through the scopes into your airways then remove it and send it to laboratory for analysis. A small sample of tissue of your lungs may also be taken.

## *After the procedure*

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If you are still sleepy from the sedation, you will be left to rest for a while in the recovery room. Because your throat will be numb, it is recommended that you neither eat nor drink for 2 hours to avoid aspiration. After the test, you may have a slight nosebleed and if you have had a biopsy taken, you might have a few streaks of blood in your phlegm. Any soreness in the throat or a hoarse voice will ease within a day or so.

## *Going Home*

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The nurse will give you a copy of the consent form and the discharge information about the procedure. You can talk to your doctor about the results and any necessary treatment at your next appointment. Once home, rest quietly for the remainder of the day. By the following day, the effects of the sedation should have worn off and you should be able to resume normal activities.

## *Getting your results*

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In many cases, the results are available immediately after the examination. However, biopsy results may take five to seven days. You can talk to your Consultant about the results and any necessary treatment at your next appointment.

## *Some frequently asked questions*

### *Can I bring someone with me?*

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We encourage escorts to drop you off at the department and nursing staff will phone your escort when you are ready to be discharged home, if you need to have someone with you. This is due to limitations of space in the department. If you feel you need someone to remain with you throughout your admission, this will be accommodated.

**Please note that we do not have facilities in the unit for babies and children.**

*Do I need to bring anything with me?*

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It would be helpful if you could bring a list of the medicines that you take or bring in the medicines, as these will need to be noted in your records.

Try not to bring any valuables into the hospital.

*How are the scopes cleaned?*

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After each use they are thoroughly cleaned, disinfected and sterilised. The hospital cleans and disinfects all scopes according to national standards set by the British Society of Gastroenterology.

*What if I need a translator?*

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If you need help with translation, there are always translators available who speak Arabic – if you require a different language – please let us know and we can arrange this.

*Are there any risks associated with having a bronchoscopy?*

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Bronchoscopy is usually a safe procedure. However, there is a small risk of problems, such as:

- A drop in your oxygen level during the procedure. Your doctor will give you oxygen if this happens.
- Minor bleeding and developing a fever or pneumonia.
- A rare, but more serious side effect is a pneumothorax. A pneumothorax is a condition in which air or gas collects in the space around the lungs. This can cause one or both lungs to collapse. Usually, this condition is easily treated or may go away on its own. If it interferes with breathing, a tube may need to be placed in the space around the lungs to remove the air.
- A chest x ray may be done after bronchoscopy to check for problems

**If you have any questions or need further information, please contact the Endoscopy unit:**

Tel: 020 7460 5605

Fax: 020 7460 2438

The unit is open from 8.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.

[www.cromwellhospital.com](http://www.cromwellhospital.com)

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