

Abdominal Paracentesis for Malignant Ascites

Drainage of fluid from the abdomen (belly) for testing of fluid caused by cancer

Why should I read this leaflet?

- If you have a build-up of fluid within your abdomen, suspected to be caused by a cancer
- If you have symptoms due to this fluid

Why do I need a drainage of fluid (paracentesis)?

- To rule out or confirm cancer by testing the fluid under a microscope
- To help with symptoms (for example, pain, bloating, breathlessness) caused by the fluid
- To allow treatments to be offered if cancer is found

Where will the paracentesis be done?

- Ward 54 (Gynaecology Ward) or Daycase Unit, Women and Children's Department, Arrowe Park Hospital

When will the paracentesis be done?

- You will be advised to come into hospital in the morning on the day of your procedure. This will be confirmed by the team looking after you.

How long will the paracentesis take?

- You will need to stay in hospital for most of the day.
- Once the drain is removed (usually after 6 hours) and you are feeling well you should be able to return home
- Very rarely, you will be advised to stay overnight on Ward 54

What will I need to bring with me?

- A list of your regular medications

What tests will be done to prepare me for my procedure?

- Blood tests
- Pelvic ultrasound scan (a scan of your belly using a probe covered in jelly)

What will happen during the procedure?

- You will be asked to go to the toilet to empty your bladder
- Once you have been to the toilet, you will be asked to lie on a bed
- The doctor or nurse will feel your abdomen
- The doctor or nurse will do another ultrasound scan to choose the best position for the drain
- The chosen area of skin will be cleaned
- You will be given an injection of local anaesthetic (numbing medicine) to numb the area.
- The drain will be inserted and attached to a bag
- Once the drain is in place, it will be taped securely with a dressing
- The fluid will drain into the bag, which will be emptied at regular intervals
- The fluid will be sent to be checked under the microscope
- You will be transferred to a chair to help the fluid to drain from around your abdomen
- You will be able to eat, drink and use the toilet facilities as normal throughout the day

What will happen after the paracentesis?

- A nurse will record how much fluid has drained and will change the fluid collection bag whenever needed
- Your blood pressure, pulse and temperature will be checked regularly

How and when will the drain be removed?

- This is a simple and painless process, which is done by a nurse
- A waterproof dressing will be placed over the area
- The drain will be taken out after roughly 6 hours or when there is no more fluid draining into the collection bag

When can I go home?

- Once you feel well, there is no bleeding from the drain site and your nurse has no concerns
- You will need to arrange for someone to be able to collect you from hospital

What are the risks of paracentesis?

Common risks:

- Tiredness
- Pain in the abdomen
- Fluid leakage from the drain site for a few days after the paracentesis

Rare risks:

- Dizziness
- Infection
- Bleeding
- Damage to the bowel, bladder or blood vessels
- Cancer deposit may later form within the incision site

What should I do when I get home?

- Rest for at least 24 hours
- After days or weeks, fluid can build up again, so contact your Macmillan Nurse Specialist if you have any of the following symptoms in case repeat drainage is advised:
 - Feeling breathless
 - Feeling full up too quickly after eating
 - Feeling bloated or in pain

Who can I contact for further help?

- Gynaecology Macmillan Specialist Nurses: 0151 607 7556

Where can I get further information?

- <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/impacts-of-cancer/ascites>
- <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/ovarian-cancer>
- <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/womb-cancer>

Name of my Consultant:.....

Name of my Macmillan Nurse Specialist
(Key Worker):.....

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille and on tape.
Please contact 0151 604 7289 if calling from outside the
Hospital and x2761 if calling from inside the Hospital.



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Date of Publication: December 2020
Date for Review: December 2022

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PL/00999

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