

Nephrology Associates

Kidney Biopsy

1. What is a kidney biopsy?
 - a. A kidney biopsy is a procedure in which the doctor takes a sample of your kidney tissue to test in a lab.
2. What is the reason for a kidney biopsy?
 - a. A kidney biopsy may be done if:
 - i. Your kidney function is decreasing for unknown reasons.
 - ii. If you have blood in your urine.
 - iii. If you have too much protein in your urine.
 - iv. If your doctor feels that an assessment needs to be done of a tumor or abscess (area of infection) in your kidney.
 - b. An alternative would be to choose not to have the procedure, recognizing the risks of your condition. You should ask your doctor about this choice.
3. How do I prepare for a kidney biopsy?
 - a. Follow any instructions that your doctor may give you. No special preparation is needed for local anesthesia.
4. What happens during the procedure?
 - a. The kidneys are visualized by one of a number of techniques such as ultrasound or CT scan. A doctor injects a local anesthetic into the skin, which is a drug that should keep you from feeling pain during the procedure. He or she then punctures the skin and guides a needle attached to a tube to the kidney. Because the kidneys move when you breathe, you must hold your breath for 15 to 20 seconds as the needle is inserted into your kidney. This may be repeated to obtain enough sample. This kidney sample is sent to the lab for analysis. It may take two weeks to complete and receive the results.
5. What happens after the procedure?
 - a. You stay under observation for about 6 hours to make sure there is no continued bleeding. Avoid all heavy activity and do not strain or lift anything the rest of the day and the following day. Ask your doctor what other instructions you should follow and when you should return for check-up.

6. What are the benefits of this procedure
 - a. The procedure helps the doctor to make a more accurate diagnosis which will help him or her to determine the proper treatment. The procedure will also help the doctor predict the probable course and/or results of a disease.

7. What are the risks associated with this procedure?
 - a. Risks include:
 - i. The local anesthesia may not numb the area enough and you may feel some minor discomfort
 - ii. In rare cases, you may have an allergic reaction to the drug used in this type of anesthesia. The reaction may cause difficulty breathing, a drop in blood pressure, unconsciousness, and/or swelling of the skin. If this occurs, you would be treated with medications to lessen the allergic reaction
 - iii. The needle may puncture a nearby blood vessel, an organ, or gland. This could cause it to leak and/or bleed. Excessive bleeding could require a blood transfusion or surgical intervention to stop the bleeding.
 - iv. If the needle crosses a collection of bacteria, it could spread an infection to other areas or to the bloodstream.
 - b. You should ask your doctor how these risks apply to you.

8. When should I call the doctor?
 - a. Call the doctor during office hours if:
 - i. You have questions about the procedure or its results.
 - ii. You want to make another appointment.
 - b. Call the doctor immediately if:
 - i. You develop a fever.
 - ii. You have severe pain.
 - iii. Your urine continues to be bloody or discolored.