

Patient information

Having a Pleural Aspiration

Your doctor has advised you to have a pleural aspiration. This information sheet briefly explains what will happen to you and the risks and benefits of the procedure. The procedure will be explained to you beforehand and any questions you might have will be answered.

Please read this information sheet carefully. Remember, if you wish, you can decide not to have the procedure

Your pleural aspiration appointment

Your procedure will take place at **West Suffolk Hospital**

In:

On (date):

At (time):

If you are unable to attend this appointment please telephone:

- **Respiratory Nurse on 01284 713652 or 01284 712779 or**
- **Respiratory secretaries on 01284 713843 / 713439**

as soon as possible.

If you are an outpatient your procedure will be seen as a day case, then you will return home the same day.

Upon arrival at the West Suffolk Hospital, your details will be checked. You may be asked some questions about your general health, your current medications and any

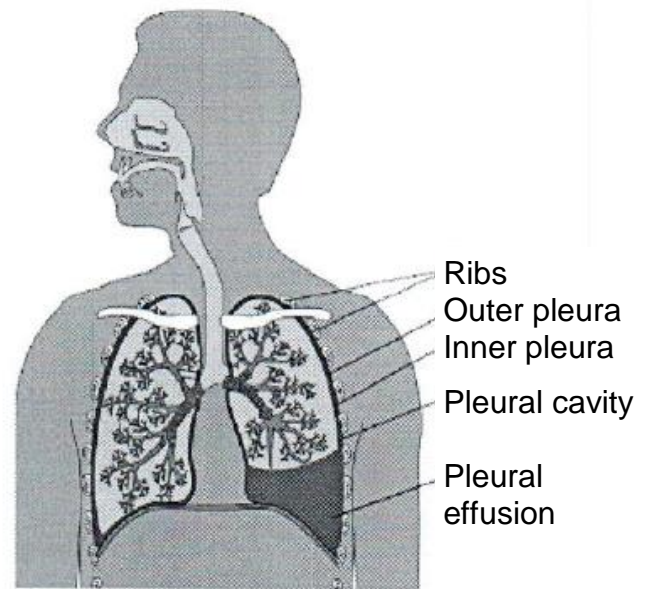
allergies you may have. We will then discuss the procedure with you and take your consent.

What is a pleural aspiration?

A pleural aspiration is a procedure which is performed to remove some fluid from around the outside of your lung. This fluid is called a pleural effusion.

There are many different causes for pleural effusions. Taking a **small** sample of fluid will help us to identify the cause in your case. This is called a **diagnostic** pleural aspiration.

If the pleural effusion is causing you to be unduly breathless we may remove a **larger** volume of fluid (**therapeutic** aspiration) to help your symptoms.



Preparing for your pleural aspiration

Take your usual medication as normal on the Pleural effusion procedure.

If you are taking a medication that thins your blood such as warfarin or clopidogrel please let the respiratory nurses know before the procedure, if nobody has discussed this with you already.

Do not wear nail varnish or false nails, as a probe may be placed on your finger to monitor your oxygen levels.

Leave your valuables at home.

Please bring any of your normal medication with you.

During the procedure

You will be taken into the procedure room and Positioned for the aspiration. You will usually be in a sitting position, although the procedure can be done while you are

lying down. The doctor or nurse performing the procedure will not necessarily be the doctor who referred you for it.

We will perform an ultrasound scan of your chest first. We will put some jelly on your chest and place a small scanner on the surface of the skin. This is not painful and is a safe test. The ultrasound scan will show us the size of the fluid around your lung and help us identify the best place to take a sample.

The sample is taken with a small needle and syringe. First, we will clean your skin with an antiseptic solution. We will numb your skin by injecting local anaesthetic. We then pass the needle through your chest wall to take the sample of fluid.

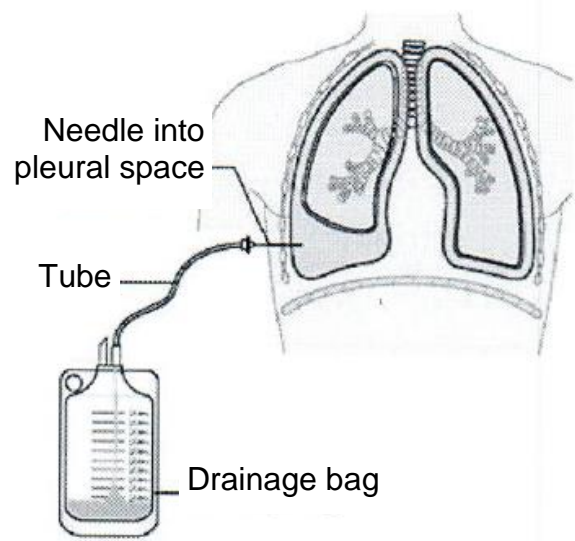


Diagram showing how a pleural effusion is drained

The procedure will usually take around 10 minutes altogether. If you are having a therapeutic aspiration it may take a little longer.

The needle is then removed and a small dressing placed on your skin.

Following the procedure

Following the pleural aspiration we will ensure you feel well. Occasionally, we will arrange for a chest X-ray or CT scan to be done. After a short time you will be able to return home.

The sample of fluid is sent for laboratory tests which can take several days. We will see you in clinic with the results.

Risks of the procedure

This is a very safe procedure with few risks. The risks will be explained at the time, when asking you to sign the consent form. The more common side effects of the procedure are:

- **Pain:** Sometimes the injection can be a little uncomfortable, there may be a light “catch” as the needle enters through the lining of the lung.

- **Bleeding:** The place that is chosen for the sampling is intended to minimise risks of bleeding. We will check your blood clotting before the procedure.
- **Infection:** The procedure is performed in a sterile manner to minimise any risk of infection in the fluid.
- **Organ puncture:** This risk is reduced by using the ultrasound at the time to locate the best site for sampling. The risk of this is therefore very low.

If you have any concerns following the procedure at home please call the respiratory nurses or your own GP.

- Respiratory Nurse on 01284 713652 or 01284 712779 or
- Respiratory secretaries on 01284 713843 / 713439

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the disabledgo website link below:

<http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust/main>