

Kidney Biopsy

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What is a kidney biopsy?

Kidney biopsies can be done in one of two ways:

- Open biopsy- Surgeon makes incision and removes piece of kidney
- Closed or needle biopsy- After sedation, the doctor uses a special needle to remove pieces of kidney with guidance from ultrasound.

The pieces of kidney removed are about half-an-inch long and the diameter of a pencil lead. The types of kidney problems diagnosed with a biopsy affect both kidneys, so only one kidney must be tested. Most of the time we biopsy the left kidney.

Why is a kidney biopsy necessary?

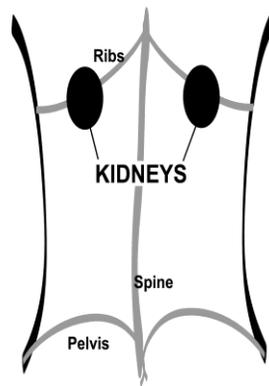
Many forms of kidney disease can only be seen in samples from the kidney. Biopsy may be needed to determine the best treatment for a disease as

well. Before a biopsy, the reasons for it should be explained. The possible outcomes of not having the biopsy should be discussed as well.

What will happen during the biopsy?

After several hours with nothing to eat or drink:

1. Sedation through an IV or with gas by a mask.
2. Placed face-down.
3. Ultrasound will be used to mark the bottom part of one kidney, usually the left.
4. Area around this spot will be cleaned.
5. Needle will be placed into the kidney with the ultrasound watching.



6. Once completed, ultrasound will be used to look for bleeding around the kidney.

7. Bandage will be placed over the area.

8. Patient will go to recovery area.

Once awake, biopsy patients can eat and drink their usual diet and take medications. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) is all that is necessary for pain control. Most patients will be able to go home later that day or the next morning.

What happens after kidney biopsy?

Any time a needle is placed into the body, there are risks:

- Infection- Kidney biopsy is done with aseptic technique to prevent infection.
- Damage to other organs- Continuous ultrasound imaging makes damage to other organs unlikely.
- Bleeding- Bleeding is considered a problem if:
 1. Blood collects near the kidney on ultrasound after the biopsy
 2. Blood is seen in the urine with the naked eye on 2 or more voids after biopsy
 3. Blood count (hemoglobin) falls after the biopsy.

Most biopsy patients go home a few hours after the procedure. The spot in the kidney where the biopsy was taken is weak for about 2 weeks and some activity may be restricted. In general, patients should avoid heavy lifting and contact activities. For most children and adolescents, the heaviest thing they carry is their backpack. Extra time between classes or help in and out of school may be needed. Contact activities include anything that may strike or jiggle the kidney. Football, wrestling, skateboarding, rollerskating, rollerblading, ice skating, weight lifting, and horseback riding are generally off-limits. Other activities may need to be restricted as well.

After 10 days to 2 weeks, the “scab” that has formed within the kidney will be shed, and there may be some blood visible in the urine. Do not panic if this happens. If there is blood on more than two voids, call the nephrology office for a blood test.

Even if problem bleeding occurs, it usually stops with bedrest. Rarely, bleeding may be so hard or last so long that a blood transfusion or surgical procedure will be needed. The risk of this happening is <1%.