Muscle Biopsy

Your caregiver has recommended that you have a muscle *biopsy* (tissue sample) to confirm or prove a suspected muscular problem. During the biopsy, a small piece of muscle tissue is removed. It is then examined under a microscope by a *pathologist* (a specialist in tissue examination). Chemical tests can be run if they are indicated. Biopsies are taken when your caregiver cannot be 100% certain of the *diagnosis* (learning what is wrong) by physical exam, X-rays, or other studies.

PROCEDURE

A biopsy is often performed as a same day surgery. This can be done in a hospital or clinic. Biopsies are often performed under local anesthesia. This is accomplished by injecting medicine that makes the area of biopsy numb. General anesthesia is usually required for very young children, this means they would be sleeping through the procedure. Muscle biopsies are generally performed by making an incision and removing a small piece of muscle.

BEFORE THE PROCEDURE

You should be present one hour prior to your procedure. Check in at the admissions desk for filling out necessary forms if not preregistered. There will be consent forms to sign prior to the procedure. There is a waiting area for your family while you are having your biopsy.

LET YOUR CAREGIVERS KNOW ABOUT THE FOLLOWING

- Allergies
- Medications taken including herbs, eye drops, over the counter medications, and creams
- Use of steroids (by mouth or creams)
- Previous problems with anesthetics or novocaine
- Possibility of pregnancy, if this applies
- History of blood clots (*thrombophlebitis*)
- History of bleeding or blood problems
- Previous surgery
- Other health problems

AFTER THE PROCEDURE

You will be taken to the recovery area where a nurse will watch and check your progress. Once you are awake, stable, and taking fluids well, barring other problems you will be allowed to go home. If the procedure has been minor you may be allowed to go home immediately. Once home, an ice pack applied to your operative site may help with discomfort and keep swelling down.

- You may resume normal diet and activities as directed.
- If the muscle biopsy was performed on an arm or leg, avoid vigorous activity until your surgeon says it is okay.
- Change dressings as directed.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- **Call for your results** as instructed by your caregiver. Remember it is **your responsibility** to obtain the results of your biopsy and any other tests performed. **Do not assume everything is fine if you do not hear from your caregiver.**

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Increased bleeding (more than a small spot) from biopsy sites.
- Redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the biopsy sites.
- Pus coming from wound.
- An unexplained oral temperature over 102º F (38.9º C).
- A foul smell coming from the wound or dressing.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop a rash.

- You have difficulty breathing.
- You have any allergic problems.

Document Released: 04/07/2004 Document Re-Released: 05/06/2010
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.