Bronchoscopy

Bronchoscopy is a procedure for diagnosing problems in the lungs. It allows your caregiver to examine the passageways in the lungs by direct exam. This is accomplished by the use of a flexible telescope-like tool *(flexible fiberoptic bronchoscope*), which is passed down to the air passageways to be examined.

BEFORE THE PROCEDURE

- Sign consent forms. These forms give your caregiver the right to perform the procedure and means that you are aware of the value and risks of the procedure.
- **Do not** eat or drink anything 8 hours before the test.
- Medications may be given to relax you, dry up your secretions, and to control coughing. The medication which dries up secretions will make your mouth very dry.
- Local anesthetics (*medications*) are given to numb your mouth, nose, throat and voice box (*larynx*).

LET YOUR CAREGIVER KNOW ABOUT:

- Allergies to food or medicine.
- Medicines taken, including vitamins, herbs, eyedrops, over-the-counter medicines, and creams.
- Use of steroids (by mouth or creams).
- Previous problems with anesthetics or numbing medicines.
- History of bleeding problems or blood clots.
- Previous surgery.
- Other health problems, including diabetes and kidney problems.
- Possibility of pregnancy, if this applies.

PROCEDURE

- Relax as much as possible during the test.
- Follow the caregiver's instructions to speed up the test.
- Your breathing is not blocked (*obstructed*) during this procedure. You will be able to breath normally during the procedure.
- If tissue samples (*biopsies*) are needed in the outer portions of the lung, sometimes a special type of X-ray (*fluoroscopy*) is required.
- Abnormal areas will be brushed or biopsied for exam under a microscope.
- If any bleeding occurs from these areas, a drug may be used to make the blood vessels smaller (*constrict*) to stop or decrease the bleeding.
- You may receive a chest X-ray following the procedure to make sure the lungs have not collapsed (*pneumothorax*).

AFTER THE PROCEDURE

- You may resume normal activities.
- Call your caregiver or return for an appointment in 3 days if biopsies were taken.
- **Do not** eat or drink anything until cough and gag reflexes have returned. There is danger of burning yourself or getting food or water into your lungs when your mouth and airways are numb. After the numbness is gone, you may begin taking a normal diet.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You become lightheaded.
- You get short of breath.
- You become faint.
- You develop chest pain.
- You cough up blood.

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