

## Bone Marrow Biopsy – Patient Information Sheet

### What is bone marrow?

Bone marrow is the delicate tissue inside bones where blood cells are made. These blood cells include red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets

### What is a bone marrow biopsy?

A bone marrow biopsy consists of two steps:

- Removing fluid through a needle, called an aspiration.
- Taking a small sample of marrow tissue, called a biopsy.

The procedure takes about 10-15 minutes, but you will be with us for up to 45 minutes.

These samples are sent to the Pathologist, who examines them under a microscope.

### Why is this test done?

A Bone Marrow procedure is a common and safe way for the Haematologist to diagnose and treat certain blood disorders. Your Healthcare team will guide you through the process and ensure your comfort and safety

### What are the risks to me?

Though bone marrow biopsies are common, complications are rare. Potential risks include

- Small risk of bleeding or infection
- Mild pain or discomfort.

These risks will be explained to you when you are asked to sign a consent form for the biopsy

### How do I prepare for the procedure?

- If you are on any type of blood thinner such as Warfarin, Pradaxa or a high dose of aspirin daily, talk with your doctor about whether to stop taking these medications before the biopsy.
- Bring someone with you to drive home, you may experience mild discomfort at the biopsy site that could make driving uncomfortable.
- You may eat and drink before this procedure.

### The Procedure:

The procedure is done in a clinic or a hospital. Bone marrow is removed from the top of the pelvic bone at the back of the hip.

- Someone will accompany you for this procedure
- The skin and the surface of the bone will be numbed with a local anaesthetic

### Aspiration:

Once the skin is numb a needle is inserted through the skin to the surface of the bone and into the bone marrow.

You may feel pressure (but not pain) when the needle is pushed through the bone.

- A syringe attached to the needle is used to draw out a sample of the liquid inside your bone marrow.
- You will feel a sharp pain for 3 to 5 seconds, when the fluid is removed. Some people also feel a pain down the back of their leg during this part of the procedure

### Biopsy:

The biopsy follows the aspiration, using the same area of bone.

The same area of bone is used for both the aspiration and biopsy.

- The needle goes through the skin onto the surface of the bone, and then into the marrow. A small sample of bone marrow tissue is taken out with the biopsy needle.
- You will feel a dull, aching pain while the biopsy is taken.

### Post Procedure:

- Your doctor will put a dressing over the biopsy site and apply some pressure. The biopsy area will be covered with small pressure plaster.
- Keep the plaster dry for the next 24 hours.
- You may experience soreness in your hip for a day or two. You can take Panadol as needed

### Contact your GP if you experience

- Bleeding or drainage from the biopsy site
- Fever
- Redness at the biopsy site

Results of a bone marrow biopsy take 5-7 days to complete.  
Your GP/Specialist will discuss the results with you once they are available