

Bone Marrow Aspiration or Biopsy without Anesthesia

Purpose

Blood cells are produced mainly in the bone marrow. The marrow is the soft, spongy center part of the bone. Bone marrow aspiration and biopsy tests show how well the bone marrow is working. During a bone marrow aspiration, a sample of fluid with bone marrow cells is taken from the bone marrow. In a bone marrow biopsy, a small sample of solid bone core is removed. The sample is usually taken from the hipbone.

Preparation

- No special preparation is required. You may eat your normal diet.
- You may take your medicines as usual, but ask your clinic team about any blood thinning medicines (blood thinners), including aspirin, **before** your procedure is scheduled. If you take these, you will be told when to stop taking them before the procedure. These drugs can cause bleeding or bruising at the site. It is important that you confirm with your clinic team whether you should stop taking your blood thinner before your procedure.
- **Complete your lab work (CBC – complete blood count and PT - prothrombin time and PTT – partial thromboplastin time) within 48 hours before your procedure. Please make sure this is part of your procedure pre-workup schedule. (Labs done on the same day may delay your procedure.)**
- Report allergies or sensitivity to tape or anesthesia before your procedure.
- The BMA team will review your allergies, any history of adverse drug reactions and any medicines you are taking before your procedure.

Procedure

- At the time of your appointment, report to the Bone Marrow Aspiration Clinic, Main Building, Floor 11, near Elevator B.
- After you check-in, we will take you back to an exam room and get your vital signs. You will have a chance to discuss the procedure with the BMA team and then sign the informed consent for the procedure. You will lie on either your stomach or your side during the procedure.
- The procedure site will be cleaned and numbed with a local anesthetic.
- A sample of bone marrow fluid will be aspirated (removed from the bone with a needle). You may feel some discomfort during the aspiration. Tell the proceduralist if you have severe pain during the procedure.
- If biopsy is ordered, a small “bone core” is then taken from the same site.
- After the procedure, pressure will be applied for several minutes to stop any bleeding, then a

dressing will be placed.

- You may be in the procedure area from 30 minutes to 1 hour.

After the Procedure

Bleeding

It is not unusual to have a small amount of bleeding after this procedure. However if you notice that blood has soaked through the dressing, please do one of the following:

- If bleeding occurs while you are here at MD Anderson, apply pressure to the aspiration/biopsy site and return to the area where the test was done. The BMA team will evaluate the site and apply another dressing.
- If bleeding occurs after you leave the hospital, call your nurse or doctor who ordered the test or go to the nearest hospital emergency center.

Bathing

- **Bone marrow aspiration only:** No tub bath or shower for 24 hours. Remove the dressing after 24 hours.
- **Bone marrow biopsy:** No tub bath or shower for 48 hours. Remove the dressing after 48 hours.

Problems to Report

- Bleeding through the dressing – call your home clinic or go directly to the nearest hospital emergency center
- Redness, swelling or drainage from the bone marrow aspiration site after you have removed the dressing – call your home clinic
- Fever greater than 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.3 degrees Celsius) – call your home clinic or go directly to the nearest hospital emergency center
- Discomfort that is not relieved by walking – call your home clinic

Your doctor will discuss results with you. If you have any questions, contact the Bone Marrow Aspiration Clinic, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 713-563-3000.