



Manchester
Urology

Prostate Ultrasound Scan and Biopsies

An Information Leaflet (*Written May 2008*)



What is the prostate gland?

The prostate gland is part of the male reproductive system. It is at the base of the bladder and goes around the urethra (the pipe you pass urine through).

As you get older, the prostate may become enlarged or change in a way which can lead to problems, such as finding it difficult to stop or start passing urine.

What is a prostate ultrasound scan?

A prostate ultrasound scan can provide valuable information about your prostate, including its size, shape and texture. You may need a prostate ultrasound scan for one of the following reasons:

- Your prostate may have felt firm or irregular when examined by the doctor or nurse using a gloved, lubricated finger via your rectum (digital rectal examination/DRE)
- A blood test may have shown higher than normal levels of prostate specific antigen (PSA). PSA is a chemical which the prostate gland releases and increased levels may suggest a problem, for example; infection, inflammation or cancerous growth in the prostate.

The scan allows us to get pictures of the inside of the prostate gland without using x-rays. The scanner uses high frequency sound waves, which are transmitted from a probe, which the doctor or specialist nurse will put in your rectum (back passage). While the probe is in place, these sound waves form a picture of the prostate, which can be seen on the ultrasound screen by the person performing the scan.

What is a prostate biopsy?

When the pictures of the prostate have been obtained, an injection of local anaesthetic (numbing treatment) will be administered into the prostate to make the procedure more comfortable. The probe remains in place in the rectum and twelve samples of tissue (biopsies) are taken from different areas of the prostate

gland. Six samples are taken from the left side of the prostate and six from the right and are then sent to the Pathology Laboratory to be examined under a microscope. The probe is removed from the rectum, when the twelve biopsies are obtained.

Are there any risks involved?

If you only have an ultrasound scan there are no side effects.

If biopsies are taken, the risks are:

- *Blood in urine, semen and stools (bowel motions).* This can last anywhere from one day to several weeks and it is recommended that you drink plenty of fluids, to flush out any blood in the urine. If the bleeding becomes heavy and will not stop, please contact your GP or your local urology department for advice.
- *Difficulty passing urine.* The prostate may react to the biopsy and swelling may occur, which could obstruct the urethra and make it difficult to pass urine. As before, please contact your GP or your local urology department for advice if this occurs.
- *Infection in the blood stream.* If within forty eight hours of the biopsy, you start to feel unwell with flu-like symptoms, experience shivering or a high temperature, please contact your GP or the Accident and Emergency Department at Stepping Hill Hospital, Stockport, as this could be a reaction which will need treating quickly with extra antibiotics and may require a short stay in hospital.

What are the alternatives?

There is no alternative to this procedure, although it can be performed under a general anaesthetic, if you are unable to tolerate the test under a local anaesthetic. A procedure under general anaesthetic would require admission to hospital.



What happens to me when I arrive in the department?

The procedure will be explained to you by the clinic nurse and any necessary documentation will be completed.

To reduce the risk of infection associated with prostate biopsies, antibiotics will be given to you, to take at least one hour prior to the procedure. You will also be given a twenty four hour course of antibiotics to take home.

On the day of the procedure, you may eat and drink as normal, although should try to avoid milk for four hours before your appointment, as this may have an effect on the antibiotics.

The antibiotics may cause drowsiness and affect your ability to drive or operate machinery. We therefore recommend that you arrange for somebody to transport you to and from your appointment.

If you are taking medication to prevent your blood from clotting, for example: **warfarin, Clopidogrel, clexane or aspirin dosage greater than 75mg**, another blood test will be necessary on the day of the procedure. It will also be necessary to stop taking the medication for some time prior to the procedure and you will need to contact your local urology department by telephone a week before your appointment, for information on when to stop taking it.

If you are epileptic and on medication, this may be affected by the antibiotics.

If you have myasthenia gravis, G6 PD deficiency or have had a course of ciprofloxacin in the last eight weeks, please contact your local urology department for advice prior to your appointment.

What happens after the procedure?

You will be given a short time to rest after the procedure and offered a drink.

You will be given an information sheet containing advice with respect to side effects of the procedure and who to contact, should a problem occur following the test.

As previously mentioned, please avoid driving, operating machinery, serious exercise or activities for forty eight hours after the procedure.

As the results of the biopsies are not available immediately, you will receive another clinic appointment for the results to be explained.

If treatment is required, this can also be discussed at this next appointment.

If no treatment is required, advice will be given on any further monitoring of PSA blood levels or DRE as necessary.

If there is a problem?

Contact your GP or the Accident and Emergency Department if you feel you may have an infection within forty eight hours of the procedure.



For further information or to arrange an appointment with a consultant, please call: 0800 656 9616

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