

Bronchoscopy

A bronchoscopy is a procedure during which the doctor examines the airways to the lungs by using a thin, flexible, lighted tube called a bronchoscope.

When is it used?

This procedure may be done because:

- You may have an irritation or growth in part of your lungs or the airways to the lungs.
- There may be an inherited deformity in the lungs.
- You may need your lungs checked for signs of cancer.
- You may have a cough or be coughing up blood.
- You may need to have cultures taken to diagnose an infection.
- You may need to have a small sample of lung tissue (biopsy) taken for lab tests.

How to I prepare for a bronchoscopy?

Follow the instructions the doctor gives you. Eat a light meal the night before the procedure and don't have anything to eat or drink for 8 hours prior to the procedure. Don't drink any coffee, tea, or water. Don't swallow water when you brush your teeth.

What happens during the procedure?

You will be given a drug before the procedure to make you sleep. You may not remember the procedure. The doctor will pass a tube through your mouth and throat, down the windpipe, and into the lungs. If the doctor finds cancer cells, growths, sores, or other unhealthy tissue, he or she may try to remove them or take a sample. If the doctor finds a foreign body, he or she may try to remove it. The doctor may try to make some of the passages in the lungs larger.

What happens after the procedure?

You may go home soon after the procedure or stay in the hospital for a while, depending on what was done and your condition after the procedure. You may be hoarse or have a cough. You will feel some soreness in your neck, which may last a few days after the procedure. It is normal to note a small amount of blood in your sputum that improves as the day moves forward. It is also not uncommon to experience a low-grade fever within the first 24 hours following the procedure.

You should ask your doctor what other steps you should take and when you should come back for a checkup.

What are the benefits of this procedure?

This procedure may help the doctor make a better diagnosis.

What are the risks associated with this procedure?

- One or more of your teeth could be chipped by the plastic mouth guard.
- Your jaw may be sore.
- Your throat may be swollen.
- You may have infection and bleeding.
- You may have a low-grade fever.
- You may have a small amount of blood in your sputum for 1-2 days.

Ask your doctor how these risks apply to you.

When should I call the doctor?

Call the doctor immediately if:

- You have shortness of breath
- You experience increasing amounts of blood in your sputum. (Please note: It is normal to experience a small amount of blood in your sputum that improves as the day moves forward.)
- You have unusual wheezing
- You develop a high or persistent fever (i.e., a temperature over 101.5 F and/or a fever that lasts beyond 24 hours following your procedure)

Special Instructions:

1. No Coumadin for 5 days prior to bronchoscopy.
2. No NSAIDS (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) aspirin, Ibuprofen, naproxen, etc. or plavix (clopidogrel) for 1 week prior to the procedure.
3. Use acetaminophen (Tylenol) for pain if needed, per the package insert.
4. Nothing by mouth 8 hours prior to procedure – no solids, no liquids except essential medications with sips of water.
5. Check in at the main admitting desk of Overlake Hospital 1 hour prior to scheduled procedure.
6. You will be in the hospital about 4 hours total.
7. Call the doctor during office hours at (425) 454-2671 if you have questions about the procedure or its results, or you want to make a follow-up appointment.
8. Do not take Metformin the morning of procedure.
9. Take half dose of insulin the morning of the procedure.
10. Please be sure to have a ride home.