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**PALM BEACH**  
**GASTROENTEROLOGY**  
**CONSULTANTS, LLC**

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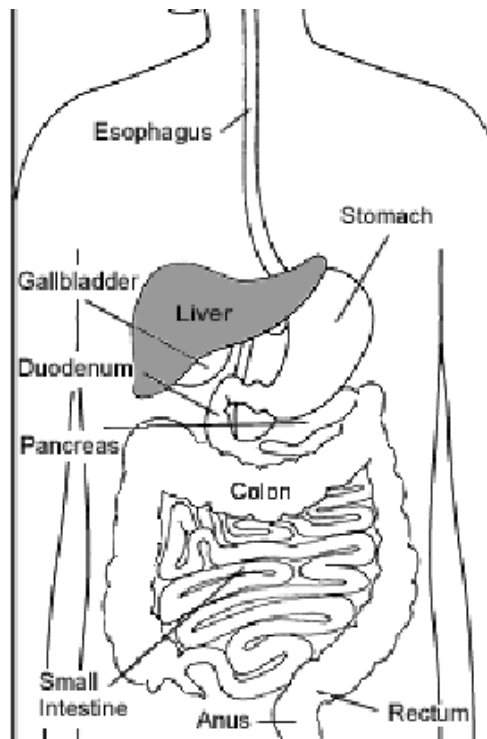
**LIVER BIOPSY**

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In a liver biopsy (BYE-op-see), the physician examines a small piece of tissue from your liver for signs of damage or disease. A special needle is used to remove the tissue from the liver. The physician decides to do a liver biopsy after tests suggest that the liver does not work properly. For example, a blood test might show that your blood contains higher than normal levels of liver enzymes or too much iron or copper. An x-ray could suggest that the liver is swollen. Looking at liver tissue itself is the best way to determine whether the liver is healthy or what is causing it to be damaged.



**Preparation**

1. Nothing to eat or drink after midnight.
2. **IF** you still have your gallbladder, you must drink a glass of milk a half-hour prior to your appointment.
3. **IF** you are taking blood pressure or heart medications, please take these medications on the day of your procedure.
4. You must have someone to drive you home.

**Procedure**

Liver biopsy is considered minor surgery, so it can be done at a surgery center. For the biopsy, you will lie on a hospital bed on your back with your right hand above your head. After marking the outline of your liver and injecting a local anesthetic to numb the area, the physician will then insert the biopsy needle and retrieve a sample of liver tissue. In some cases, the physician may use an ultrasound image of the liver to help guide the needle to a specific spot.

You will need to hold very still so that the physician does not nick the lung or gallbladder, which are close to the

liver. The physician will ask you to hold your breath for 5 to 10 seconds while he or she puts the needle in your liver. You may feel pressure and a dull pain. The entire procedure takes about 20 minutes.

## Recovery

After the biopsy, the physician will put a bandage over the incision and have you lie on your right side, pressed against a towel, for 1 to 2 hours. The nurse will monitor your vital signs and level of pain.

Avoid exertion for the next week so that the incision and liver can heal. You can expect a little soreness at the incision site and possibly some pain in your right shoulder. This pain is caused by irritation of the diaphragm muscle (the pain usually radiates to the shoulder) and should disappear within a few hours or days.

Your physician may recommend that you take Tylenol for pain, but you must not take aspirin or ibuprofen for the first week after surgery.

Like any surgery, liver biopsy does have some risks, such as puncture of

the lung or gallbladder, infection, bleeding, and pain.

APPT DATE:

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