Muscle Biopsy Information

The muscle biopsy procedure does not involve major surgery. It is performed here at the Neuromuscular Center. Local anesthesia is used and you go home the same day. The entire procedure should take one to two hours.

Important information regarding this procedure is listed below:

1   Before the muscle biopsy, inform your physician if you have any allergies to local anesthesia (such as Novocain) or if you have any bleeding problems. Try not use aspirin or aspirin products (medicines such as Motrin, Advil, Aleve) for a week before the biopsy. It is okay to eat the day of the procedure.

2   The day of the biopsy, the physician will clean the area to biopsied (usually the biceps, shoulder, or thigh) with antiseptic medicine. A local anesthetic called Lidocaine will be injected into the skin over the muscle. This will cause some slight burning, but then the area will become numb. You should not feel any pain during the biopsy.

3   Next, the physician will make an incision approximately 2 inches long. Three or four very small pieces of muscle will be removed and sent to the laboratory. The removal of these small pieces will not cause any weakness in your muscle.

4   The skin will be sutured shut and the wound covered by ordinary Band-Aids. The stitches will need to be removed in 10-14 days. This is typically done back here at the Neuromuscular Center, but you can have these removed by your primary care provider.

5   When the local anesthetic wears off, the biopsy site may be somewhat sore. This soreness may persist for 24-48 hours.   The doctor will give you a prescription for a pain medicine such as Tylenol with codeine for you to take if necessary. When the soreness of the biopsy site subsides, you will be able to perform routine activities as tolerated. Undue exertion, such as heavy lifting or running, should be avoided until after the sutures are removed.

6   It can take several weeks to get all the results back. The physician who ordered the muscle biopsy will inform you of the results when they become available.