

Are there any risks or complications?

Any time the skin is pierced or cut, there is a chance of infection. Other possible complications include:

- bleeding at the site
- an air leak into the chest cavity (called a pneumothorax)
- bleeding into the chest cavity (called a hemothorax)
- fluid in the lungs (called pulmonary edema) – a rare reaction to a large amount of fluid removed
- trouble breathing

When to get help

Call your doctor if you have:

- Fever above 38.5°C (101°F), aches and chills
- Fluid starts or continues to leak out from the needle site

Go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have any of the following:

- Sudden shortness of breath
- Sudden onset of chest pain
- Swelling at the needle site

HealthLinkBC

8-1-1

Call any time you have any questions or concerns. HealthLinkBC is open 24 hours.

Available in 130 languages. For an interpreter, say your language in English. Wait until an interpreter comes on the phone.

Locations

Abbotsford-Regional Hospital Medical Imaging 2 nd Floor, Fraser Wing, 32900 Marshall Road, Abbotsford	604-851-4866
BC Cancer Agency Medical Imaging, 3 rd Floor, 600 West 10 th Ave, Vancouver	604-877-6000
Burnaby Hospital Medical Imaging, 3 rd Floor, 3935 Kincaid St., Burnaby	604-434-4211
Chilliwack General Hospital Medical Imaging, Main Floor, 45600 Menholm Rd, Chilliwack	604-795-4122
Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre Medical Imaging, 2 nd Floor, 9750 140 th Street, Surrey	604-533-3308 Ext 63926
Langley Memorial Hospital Medical Imaging, Main Floor, 22051 Fraser Highway, Langley	604-533-6405
Lions Gate Hospital Medical Imaging, Lower Level, 231 East 15 th Street, North Vancouver	604-984-5775
Peace Arch Hospital Medical Imaging, Main Floor, 15521 Russell Ave, White Rock	604-531-5512
Powell River General Hospital Medical Imaging, 5000 Joyce Avenue, Powell River	604-485-3282
Richmond Hospital Medical Imaging, Main Floor, 7000 Westminster Hwy, Richmond	604-278-9711
Ridge Meadows Hospital Medical Imaging, Main Floor, 11666 Laity Street, Maple Ridge	604-463-1800
Royal Columbian Hospital Medical Imaging, Columbia Tower 330 East Columbia Street, New Westminster	604-520-4640
St. Paul's Hospital Medical Imaging, 2 nd Floor, Providence Building 1081 Burrard Street, Vancouver	604-806-8006
Sechelt Hospital Medical Imaging, 5544 Sunshine Coast Hwy, Sechelt	604-885-8608
Squamish Hospital Medical Imaging, 38140 Behmer Drive, Squamish	604-892-6025
Surrey Memorial Hospital Medical Imaging, 1 st Floor, Lower Level, 13750 96 th Avenue, Surrey	604-588-3308
UBC Hospital Medical Imaging, Main Floor, 2211 Westbrook Mall, Vancouver	604-822-7076
Vancouver General Hospital GI/GU Department, Jim Pattison Pavilion Station 5, Ground Floor, 855 West 12 th Avenue, Vancouver	604-875-4111 Ext 68612

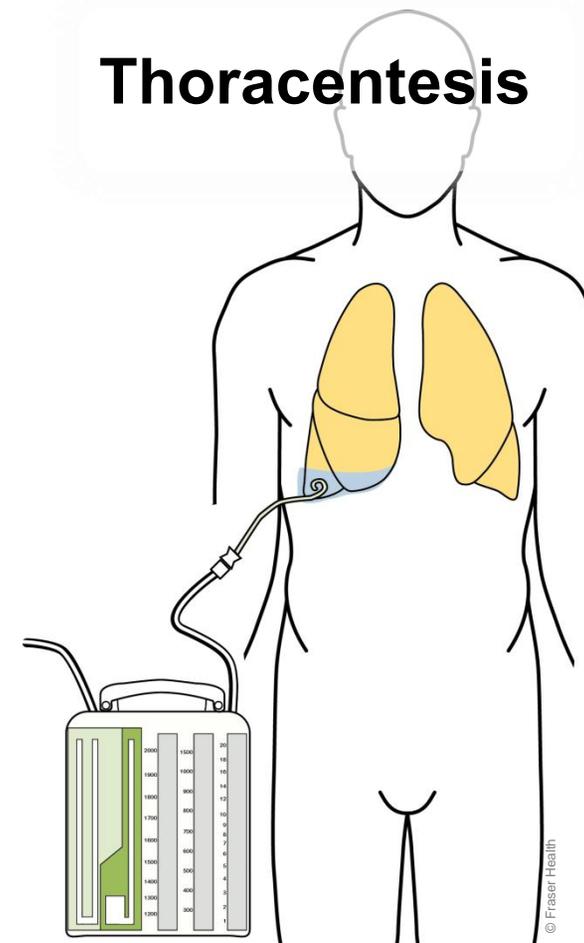
www.fraserhealth.ca – www.vch.ca

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

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Thoracentesis



Follow-up Instructions/Appointment:

What is a Thoracentesis?

Thoracentesis is the removal of fluid from around a lung. A build-up of fluid around a lung can make breathing difficult. Removing the fluid should help you feel better.

There are a number of reasons for this fluid build-up. You might already know why this has happened or this procedure might be done to help find out why the fluid is there.

Why do this procedure?

Depending on how much fluid is in your chest, this procedure can:

- Help make you more comfortable
- Make it easier for you to breathe

To help find out why the fluid is here, samples are taken and sent for testing.

Who does this procedure?

It is done by a radiologist (a doctor who specializes in image guided procedures). Ultrasound, fluoroscopy, or CT Scanning is used to guide the radiologist to the best place to take a sample of the fluid.

You might need to arrange for a 'responsible adult' to take you home after this procedure.

Check with the site where you are scheduled for your procedure.

Can I bring a relative or friend?

Yes, they can stay with you before and after the procedure. However, for reasons of safety and regulations, they cannot be in the room during the procedure. We will tell you where family members can wait.

What happens before the procedure?

Our Medical Imaging Department contacts you with specific instructions on how to prepare for the procedure.

What happens during the procedure?

- A nurse checks your blood pressure and heart rate, and might also ask you about your health history.
- You sit on the edge of a bed with your head and arms resting on a pillow supported by a table or you lie down.
- The radiologist uses ultrasound to locate the fluid in your chest.
- The radiologist injects numbing medicine to 'freeze' the area.
- A special needle is then inserted into the chest, between ribs. A drainage tube is attached to drain the fluid into a collection container. If needed, samples are sent for testing.
- Once the fluid has completely drained, the drainage tube is pulled out. We place a pressure bandage over the needle site.

It is important to stay as still as possible during the procedure. You might feel the urge to cough. Try not to cough too hard while the drainage tube is in place.

Tell us right away if you have any chest pain or shortness of breath during the procedure and while the fluid is draining.

How long will it take?

It takes between 30 minutes to 1 hour to complete the procedure.

Does it hurt?

It might sting or burn as the numbing medicine is injected. You should not feel any pain as the needle goes in. However, you might feel some pressure and discomfort. As the fluid drains, you should feel better.

What happens afterwards?

You stay in the hospital until your blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing are normal for you. You might need to breathe some oxygen for a while.

We take a chest x-ray to check your lungs.

Most people go home the same day.

When will I get the results?

If we collect samples of the fluid, the results are sent to your doctor's office within 2 weeks. Make an appointment with your doctor to review the results.