

MUSCLE BIOPSY TESTING FOR SUSCEPTIBILITY TO MALIGNANT HYPERTHERMIA



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A MUSCLE BIOPSY IS A TEST FOR MALIGNANT HYPERTHERMIA, A CONDITION WHICH MAY BE LIFE-THREATENING AND CHARACTERISED BY MUSCLE OVER-ACTIVITY, HIGH TEMPERATURES, DERANGEMENT OF BLOOD CHEMISTRY. CERTAIN ANAESTHETIC DRUGS TRIGGER THIS CONDITION, AND THE TEST DETERMINES WHETHER THESE DRUGS CAN BE SAFELY GIVEN TO YOU.

THIS IS A DAY CASE PROCEDURE BUT NORMALLY WE LIKE TO SEE YOU THE DAY BEFORE THE TEST WHEN YOU ARE PRE-ADMITTED AND BLOOD TESTS AND OTHER TESTS ARE UNDERTAKEN. FOLLOWING THIS, YOU WILL BE FREE TO RETURN TO YOUR ACCOMMODATION IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON.

THE MUSCLE BIOPSY IS UNDERTAKEN THE NEXT DAY AND MUSCLE IS TAKEN THROUGH AN INCISION 3–4 CM LONG OVER THE OUTSIDE OF THE LEG, ABOUT 10 CM ABOVE THE KNEE JOINT. THE OPERATION IS USUALLY PERFORMED UNDER GENERAL ANAESTHETIC (IT IS POSSIBLE TO USE SOME ANAESTHETIC DRUGS THAT WE KNOW DO NOT TRIGGER MALIGNANT HYPERTHERMIA, BUT THIS TECHNIQUE IS NOT ALWAYS APPROPRIATE TO OTHER OPERATIONS), OR A SPINAL ANAESTHETIC.

THE TEST RESULT IS OBTAINED THE SAME DAY AND THIS IS DISCUSSED WITH YOU BEFORE DISCHARGE. THERE IS DISCOMFORT AT THE SITE OF THE OPERATION FOR SEVERAL DAYS AND THIS PROGRESSIVELY LESSENS OVER A PERIOD OF 2–3 WEEKS. MOST CAN RETURN TO WORK WITHIN TWO WEEKS OR EARLIER. POST-OPERATIVE WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS FOR CARE OF THE WOUND ARE PROVIDED BY THE WARD.

We encourage feedback and assurance is given that comments will not adversely affect your current or future care.

You can do this:

- through discussion with MidCentral Health staff providing your care
- by completing “Tell us what you think...” pamphlets available from all services
- by contacting our Customer Relations Co-ordinator, PO Box 2056, Palmerston North or phone (06) 350 8980
- by contacting a Health and Disability Commissioner Advocate, phone 0800 112 233.