

Skin biopsy at the clinical neurophysiology department

Purpose of procedure

A skin biopsy is done to investigate peripheral nervous system disorders, called polyneuropathies, and sometimes when diagnosing various neuropathic pain conditions. A sample of your skin will be collected to find out how many sensory nerve fibres it contains compared to normal healthy person.

How to prepare

- If you take anticoagulant, a blood thinner medicine (such as Marevan, Pradaxa, Eliquis, Lixiana), please inform the physician before the examination. Please inform the physician as well if you have been diagnosed with an increased risk of bleeding. **If you take Marevan, please check your latest INR result before the examination.**
- You can take any regularly taken medicine as you normally would. You can also eat and drink normally before the examination.
- Please tell us if you have any known allergies to drugs or anaesthetics before we start the procedure!

What to expect

We usually take the biopsy from the lateral (outer) part of the lower leg, about 10 cm above the ankle. The biopsy can be taken from elsewhere as needed, as an area of pain that is in question. You will be lying on your back during the procedure.

The physician will anaesthetize the biopsy site with an anaesthetic and collect a thin piece of skin about 3 mm in diameter with a small punch. A bandage will be placed over the site to protect the wound. The entire procedure, including anaesthesia, will take about 15 to 30 minutes. Collecting the biopsy itself will only take about 1 minute.

After the procedure

You should keep the wound dry for 48 hours. Separate aftercare instructions will be provided in paper at the time of the procedure.

A biopsy report will be given by a pathologist. The report will be sent to the ward or outpatient clinic that requested the study, and they will tell you about the results and any follow-up you may need.