



Introduction

A pleural effusion is a build-up of fluid in the space between the lungs and the chest wall. This space is called the pleural space. Pleural Tapping and Biopsy is a procedure to remove fluid and get tissue sample from this area. It can be diagnostic and therapeutic.

Reasons for Procedure

There is always a small amount of fluid in the pleural space. The fluid helps to lubricate the area. When too much fluid builds up in this space, it can make you difficult to breathe. Doctors need to test some of the fluid or tissue sample after removing it. If the amount of fluid is significant, taking out the extra fluid will help to relieve your symptoms and can make you feel more comfortable.

Procedure

Pleural tapping and biopsy is a minor surgical procedure. You may be asked to sit upright on the edge of a bed or chair. After the injection of local anaesthetic, doctor may make a skin nick and then put a needle or catheter into the pleural space through the skin nick. You may feel slight pain when the needle / catheter is first inserted. Your doctor may adjust the needle / catheter position to improve gas or fluid extraction. Some or all of the fluid will be drawn into the syringe. Doctor may also take out some pleural tissue in order to find the cause of disease. After the procedure, a sterile dressing is applied on the site of puncture.

Preparation

- Be relaxed!
- Put your arms to a position according to the instruction of your doctor/ nurse.
- The skin will be sterilized by antiseptic solution and draped with sterile towel.
- Don't touch the towel as this will increase chance of infection.

Complications

- Common complications: cough, mild pain and mild bleeding.
- Uncommon complications: vasovagal syncope and failed tapping.
- Rare but serious complications: massive bleeding, pneumothorax, re-expansion pulmonary oedema, pleural space infection, death.

Disclaimer

The list of complications is not exhaustive and other unforeseen complications may occasionally occur. In special patient groups, the actual risk may be different. For any queries or further information, please consult our medical staff.

Reference

Smart Patient Website by Hospital Authority: Pleural Tapping and Biopsy (2018)

Patient's Signature : _____ Date: _____

Patient's Label

Patient Name: _____

Hospital No: _____

Episode No: _____