FAQs ABOUT RADIOLOGY-GUIDED NEEDLE BIOPSY

What is a biopsy?
A biopsy is a sample of tissue taken from the body so that it can be examined more closely. It is done by taking a small amount of tissue from the area of concern. Diseases of the liver, kidney, lung, pancreas, thyroid, lymph node, spine, or bone are found through this test. A biopsy is minimally invasive. This means that the radiologist will usually use a needle smaller than an IV needle to take the tissue sample. A pathologist will look at the sample. A biopsy helps your doctor to make a diagnosis, which is important when deciding your treatment plan.

How can I get ready for this test?
Before your appointment, a nurse will call you and give you information about what you can and cannot eat or drink before your biopsy. If you take a blood thinner, such as Coumadin®, Plavix®, aspirin, or NSAIDs (ibuprofen or Aleve®), please let your nurse know. The nurse will tell you how to take your medicines. Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) is okay to take. Once you come to the hospital, you will be taken to the Radiology Holding Area, where a member of your care team will get you ready for the test.

How will this test affect me?
It is important for you to work with your doctors before, during, and after this test. Before the day of the biopsy, you will be asked to have a blood test before the procedure. When you come for the biopsy appointment, a nurse will start an IV (intravenous line). You may be connected to a monitor so that a nurse can watch your vital signs. A radiology-guided biopsy is a safe procedure, but there can be risks. Risks depend on the area being tested. Feel free to talk with your doctor before the procedure about possible problems. After the biopsy, you will have to stay at the hospital between 4 to 6 hours. If you have a renal biopsy, you may have to stay overnight.

How is this test performed?
Before the biopsy, you will be asked questions about your medical history, symptoms, medicines, and allergies. You will meet with a radiologist (doctor), who will tell you about the test, and you will sign a consent form. During the test, you will lie on the bed/table on your back, stomach, or on either side of your body. Some scanning will be done to find the area in question. Your skin will be cleaned and numbed. Then, an injection will be put into the skin. You may have IV sedation, which makes you sleepy or drowsy for a short amount of time during the test. Besides a slight sting from the medicine, this test doesn’t cause much pain. At the end, you may be given a small ice pack. You will also be told how to deal with pain or discomfort.

How will I find out the results of my test?
The results will be sent to your doctor within 2 to 3 business days. Check with your care provider to see if you can view your test results through MyUPMC at MyUPMC.com.