

# Common Questions and Answers About Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA)

## What is a Fine Needle Aspiration?

A fine needle aspiration (FNA) is a procedure that helps provide information about the cause of a lump or mass.

A pathologist uses a very thin needle to remove cells from the lump. This needle is thinner than those used to draw blood. The sample is sent to the lab to be looked at under a microscope.

## Does the Procedure Hurt?

Most people do not have any pain during this procedure. A local anesthetic (a drug that numbs an area of your body) is not commonly used because it can be more uncomfortable than the procedure. After the FNA, the site will be covered with a bandage and you can return to your normal activities.

## Are There Side Effects?

The most common side effects at the site are:

- mild pain for 1 to 2 days
- bruising
- hematoma (clotted or partially clotted blood under the skin, usually caused by a broken blood vessel)

You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to help relieve any pain.

## Your Appointment

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. / p.m.

Please plan to spend at least \_\_\_\_\_ minutes / hours at the facility.

If you need to cancel or reschedule, call at least 24 hours before your scheduled appointment.

## Are There Complications?

As with all procedures, there are risks of complications (problems), but these are rare.

Call your health care provider right away if you have:

- swelling of the lump
- trouble breathing or swallowing.

## What Do I Need To Do Before the Procedure?

You do not need to do anything special before a FNA.

## What Do I Do The Day of My Appointment?

On the day of your appointment, you will need to go to the admitting desk. Please bring your insurance information with you. A member of the hospital staff will take you to the room where you will have your procedure. You will have time to ask any questions you may have about the FNA.

## When Will I Get My Results?

The lab will give your results to your health care provider 1 to 2 days after your procedure. Your provider will notify you of your results.

## Is It Possible That I Will Have To Do the Procedure Again?

Sometimes the procedure needs to be done again if not enough cells were taken to get an accurate result. Your health care provider will decide if you need to repeat the FNA.

## Allina Health Laboratory

To schedule a FNA, call the Pathology Department at any of the following Allina Health hospitals.

- Abbott Northwestern Hospital:  
612-863-4668
- Mercy Hospital: 763-236-8190
- Mercy Hospital — Unity Campus:  
763-236-4825
- United Hospital: 651-241-8701