

Having a biopsy

Diagnosis and Treatment



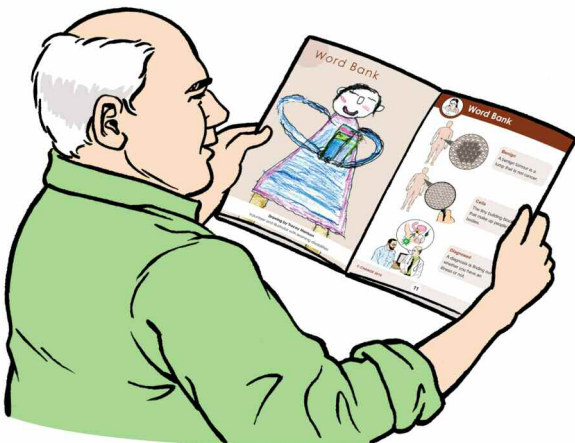
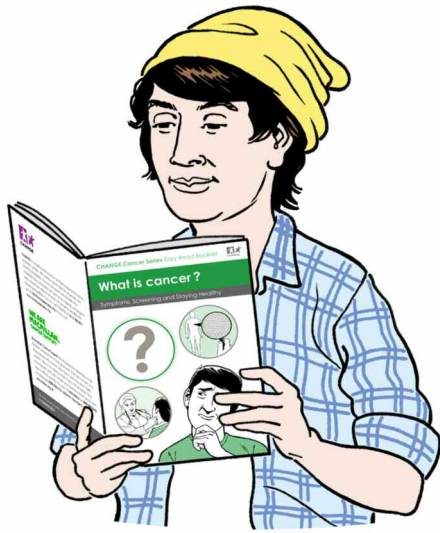
Introduction

This booklet uses easy words and pictures to help you get information about cancer.

You might want someone to help you look at the booklet so you can talk about it.

There is a Word Bank at the back of the booklet to help with hard words. Any words in **bold** you can find in the Word Bank.

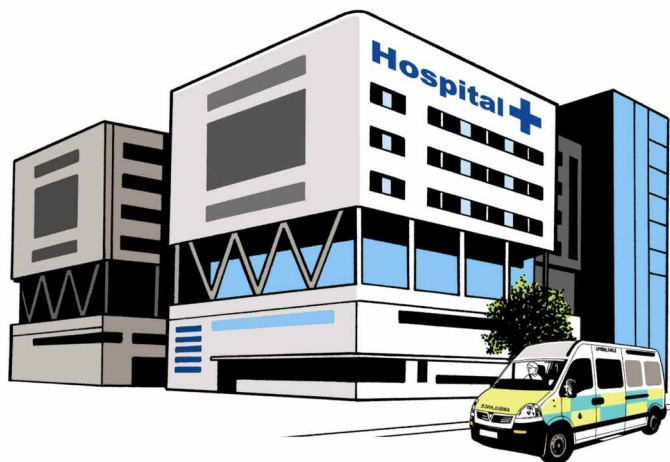
This booklet can help you learn about cancer. But this is not the same as talking to your doctor. If you are worried about your health, you should talk to a doctor or nurse.





Having a biopsy

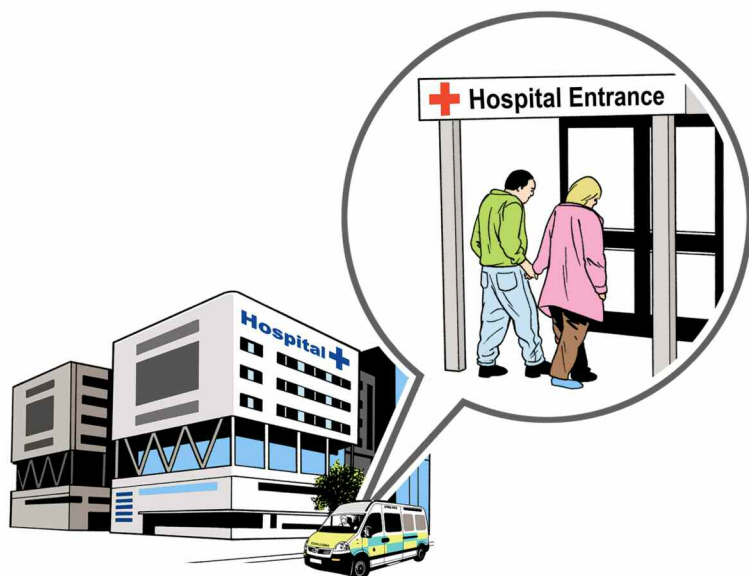
Having tests at the hospital



Here are some things you might want to do if you need to have tests at the hospital.



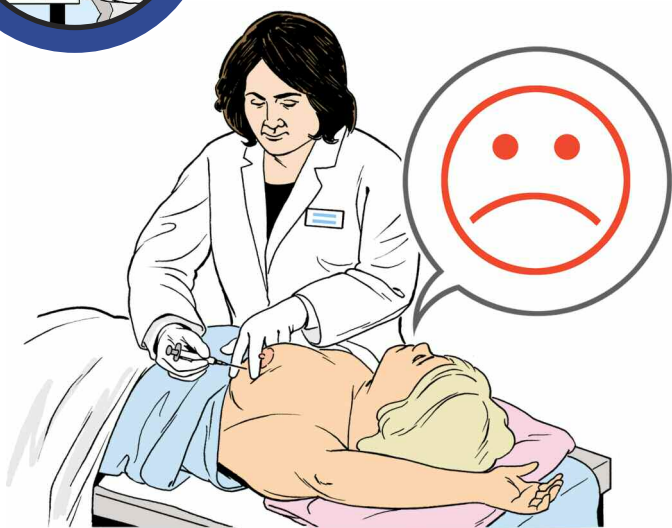
- Ask the nurse, doctor or your supporter to explain everything they are going to do before they do it.



- It could be a good idea to visit the hospital with your supporter before you go for the tests. Then you will know what it is like.



Having a biopsy



- Tests can be uncomfortable but should not be painful. Tell the doctor, nurse or your supporter if you have any pain.



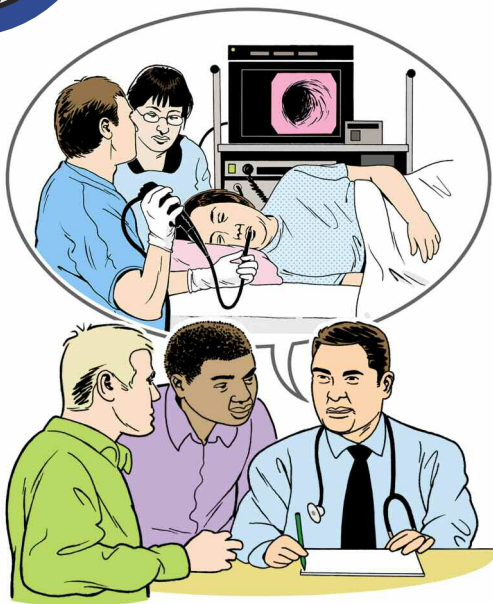
- Some tests can hurt your baby if you are pregnant. So it is very important to tell the nurse, doctor or your supporter if you are pregnant.



Tell them if you think you might be pregnant - even if you're not sure.

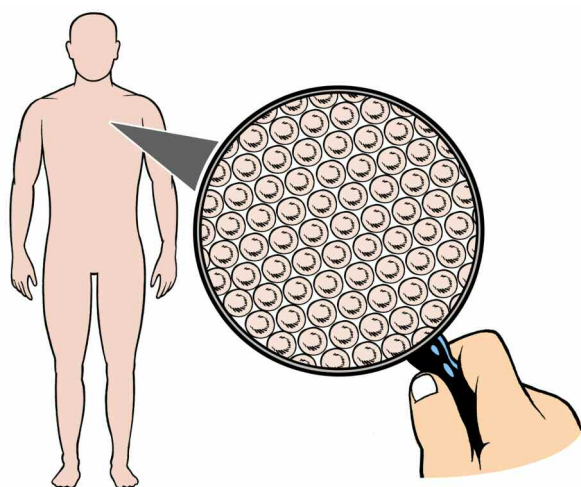


Having a biopsy



There are different tests that you may have to have. Usually you will need more than one test to find out what's wrong.

Biopsy



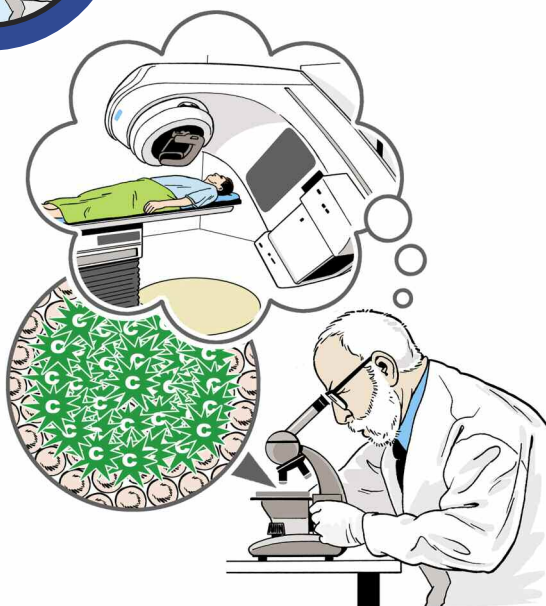
A **biopsy** is a test that looks at **cells** from your body. Cells are the tiny bits that your body is made up of.



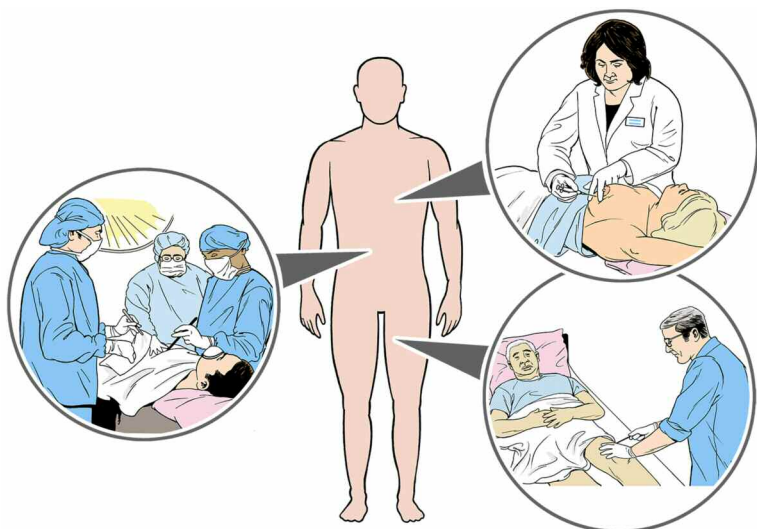
A doctor takes some cells from inside your body. Then they will look at them under a **microscope** to see them more clearly.



Having a biopsy



Then they can see if there is any cancer. If you have cancer, looking at the cells helps the doctor decide which treatment would be best for you.



For a biopsy, cells can be taken from different parts of your body.

Skin or muscle biopsy



For a skin or muscle biopsy the doctor will take away a small piece of your skin or muscle. Then they will look at it closely.



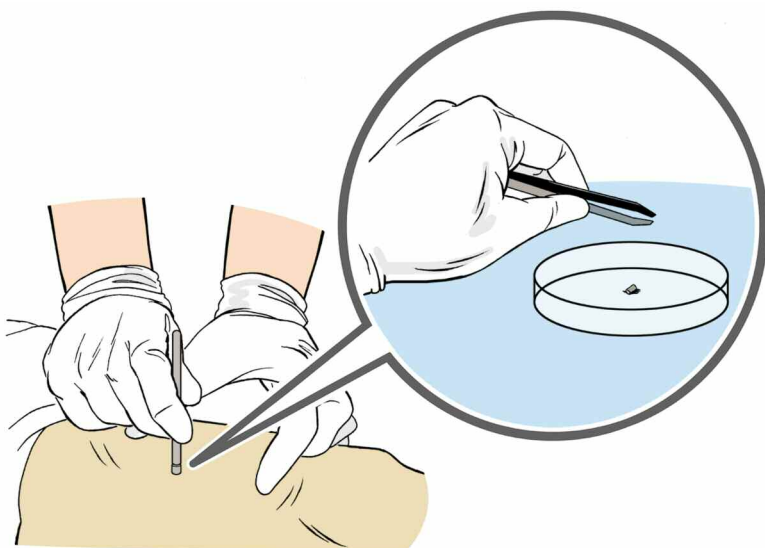
Having a biopsy



Before the biopsy, the area of your skin where they will do the test is cleaned.



The nurse or doctor will then use some medicine to numb the area so that you can't feel any pain.



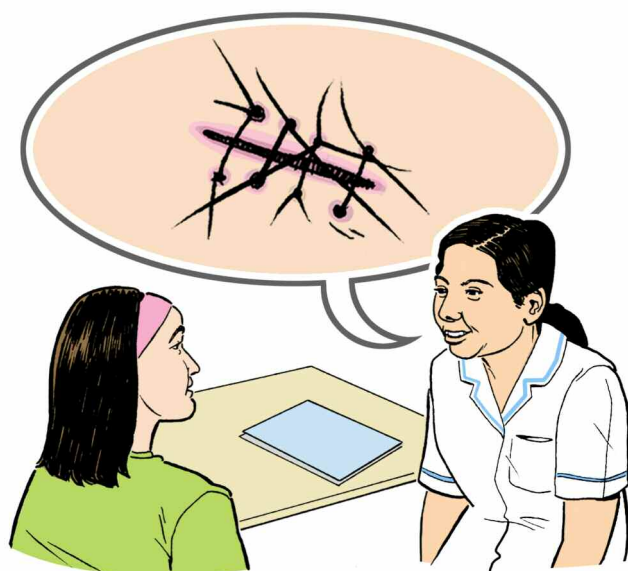
A small cut is made in your skin using a small sharp knife. Then the doctor will take some skin or muscle.



Having a biopsy

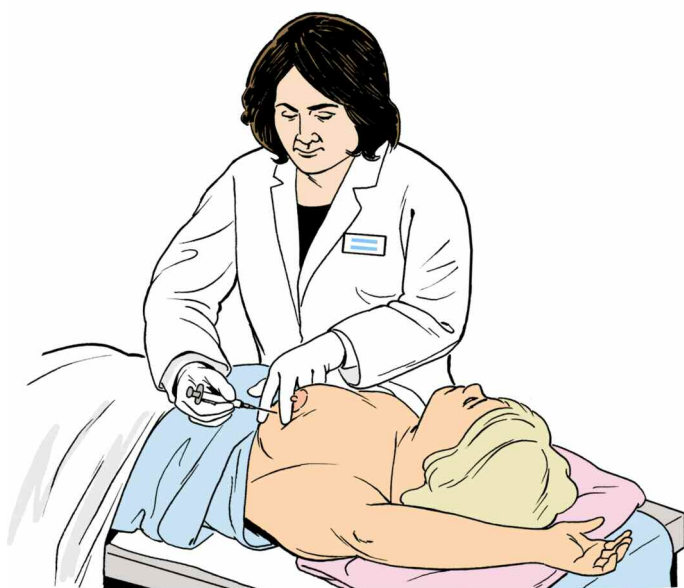


The **wound** is then closed by stitching it back together.



The nurse or doctor will tell you how to look after your wound or who may be able to help you with this.

Needle biopsy



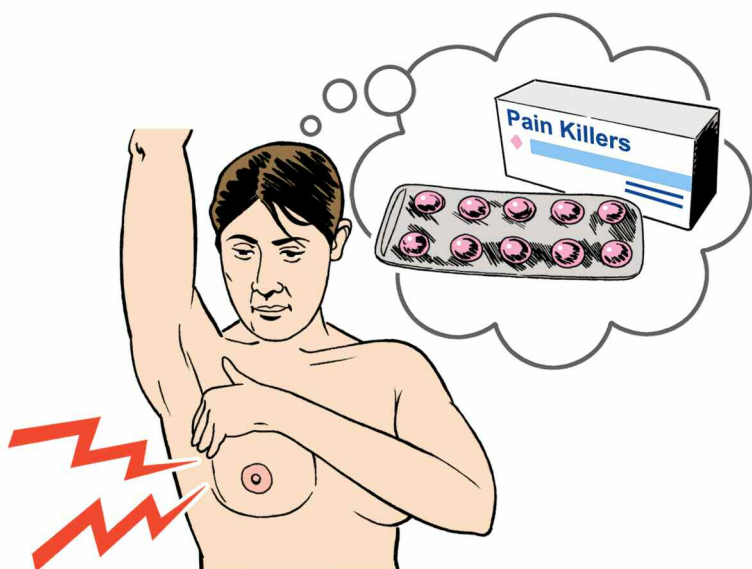
In a needle biopsy, a needle is put into your skin. This is done to collect some cells from deeper inside your body. For example, from your kidney or your breast.



Having a biopsy



The doctor or nurse will use some medicine to numb the area of skin. This is so that you don't feel any pain.

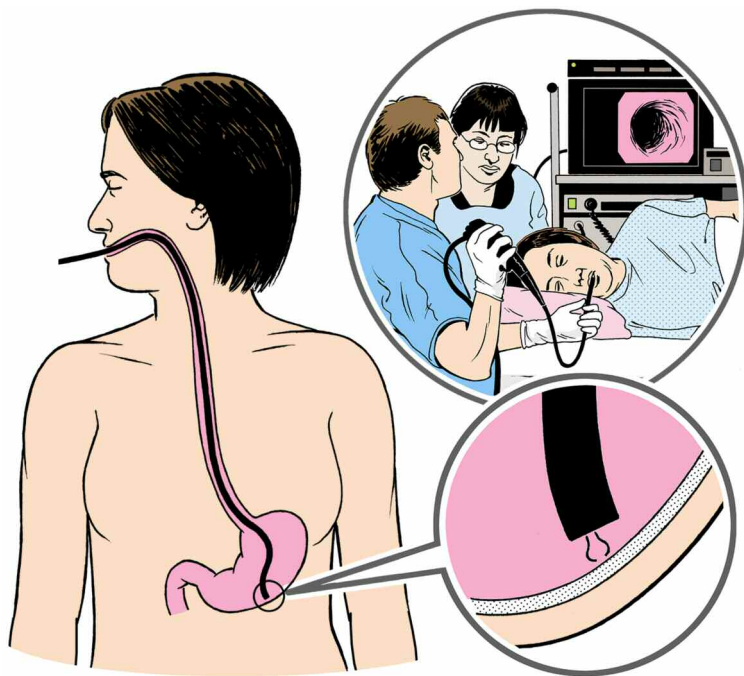


Later on it might feel sore and you may need to take some painkillers.

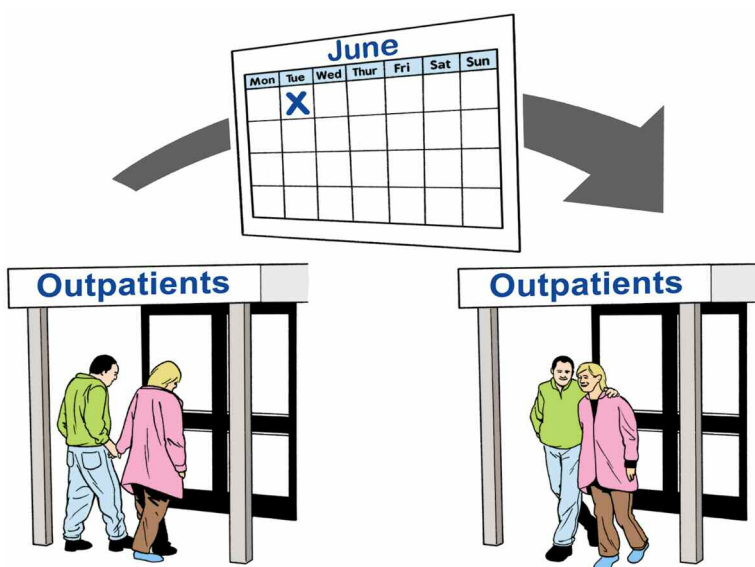


Having a biopsy

Biopsies during other tests



Some biopsies are taken from inside the body during other tests like an **endoscopy** or **colonoscopy**.



You can have these tests as an outpatient. This means you can go home afterwards. You won't have to stay in hospital overnight.

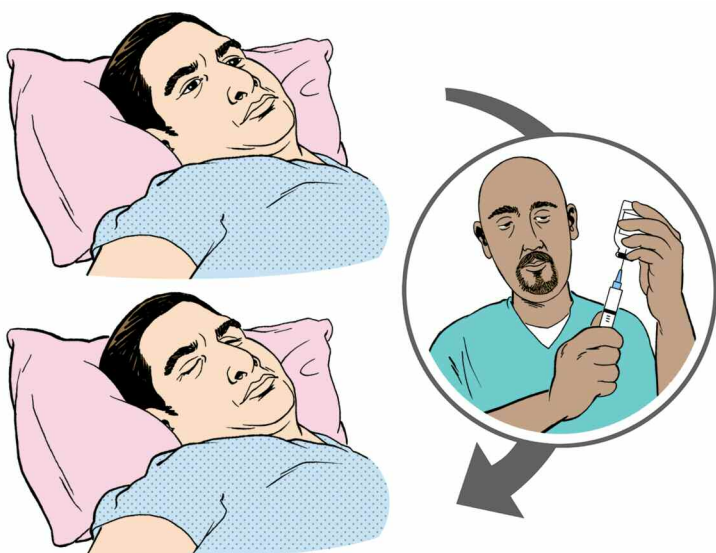


Having a biopsy

Open biopsy



An open biopsy is done when a doctor opens up a part of your body to collect some cells.



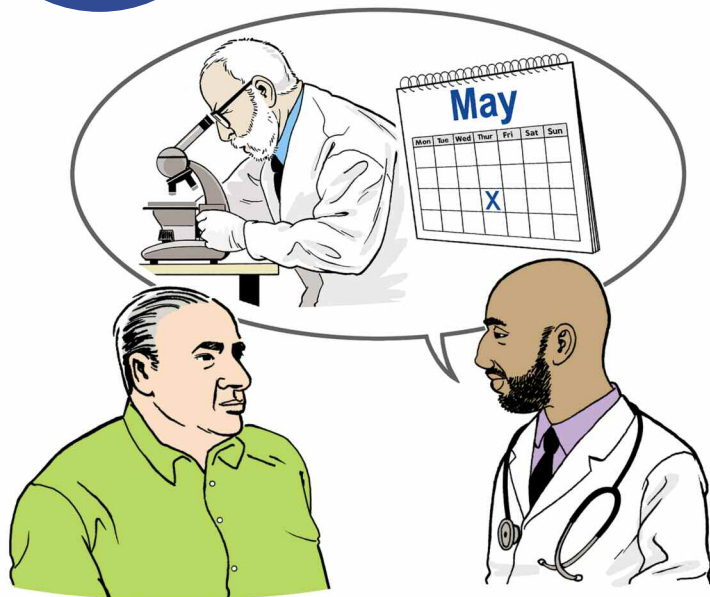
This means you will have an operation. You will need to have something called a **general anaesthetic** to put you completely to sleep for a short time. This is to make sure you don't feel any pain.



You will need to stay in hospital overnight.



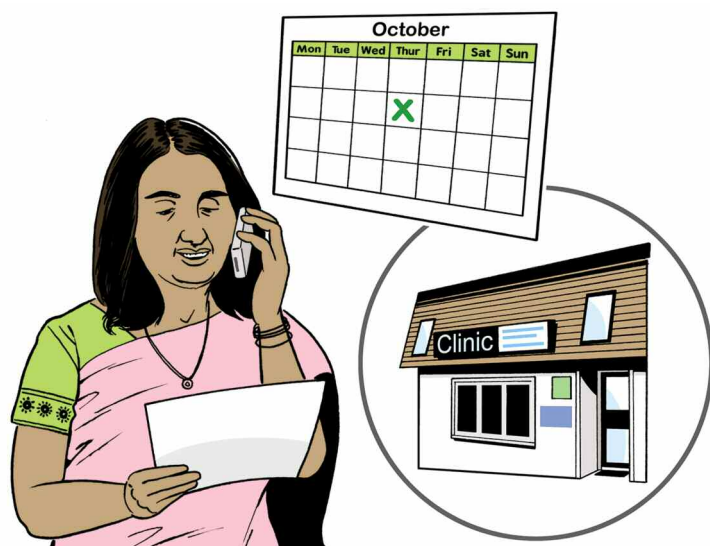
Having a biopsy



After the biopsy it can take a few days for the doctors to find out if you have cancer. The doctor will tell you how long you will have to wait to find out.



It can be worrying to wait for the results of the tests. Make sure you have someone who you can talk to and who can support you when you get the results.



Your results will come as a letter or a phone call and you may be asked to come back to see your doctor.

Word Bank

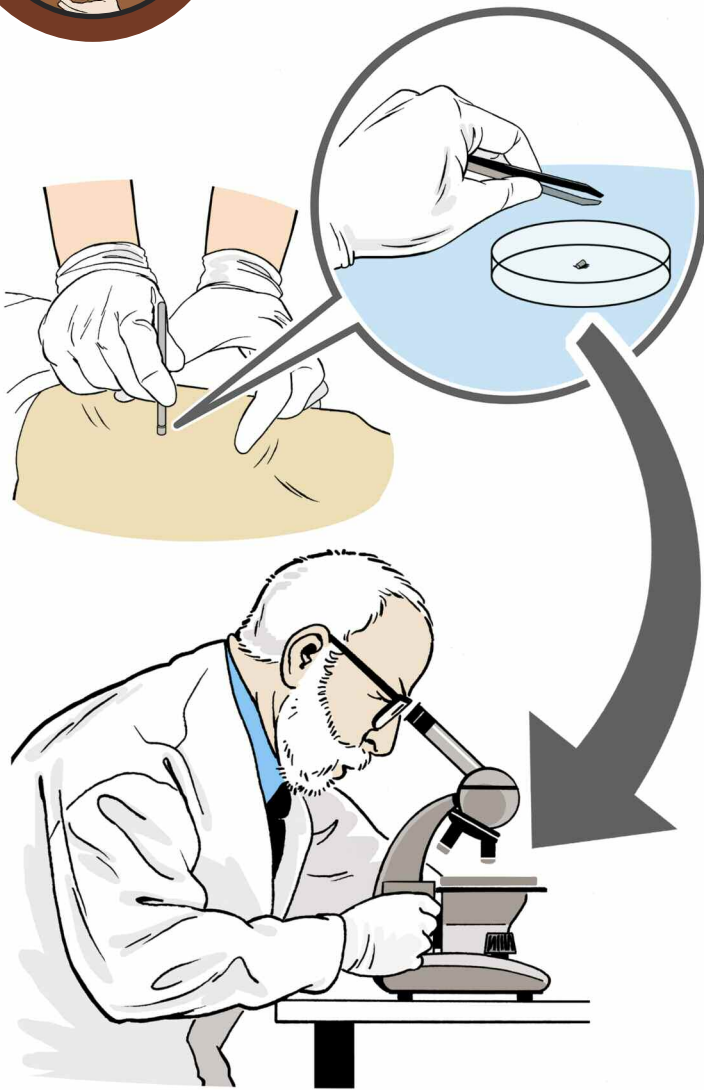


Drawing by Tracey Harrison

Volunteer and Illustrator with learning disabilities

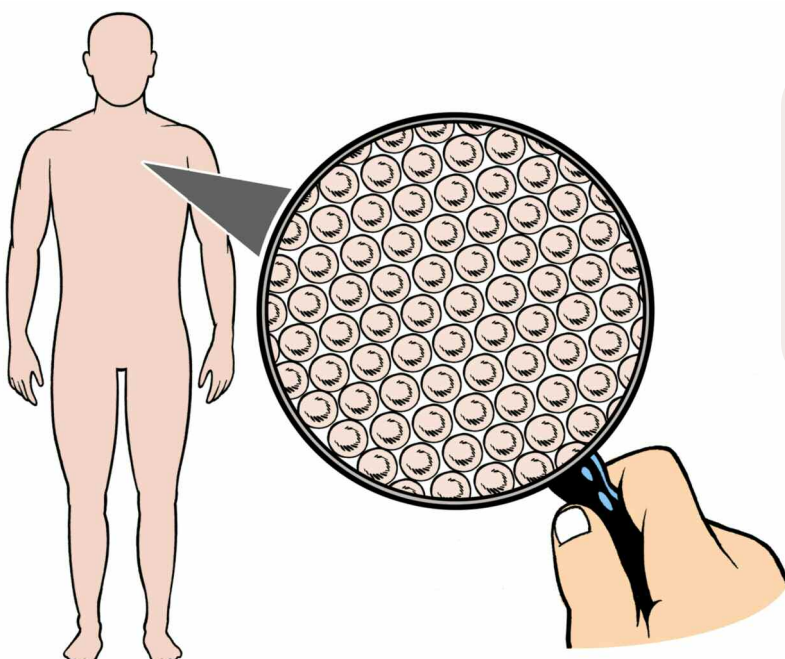


Word Bank



Biopsy

A biopsy is a test using cells taken from the body. These cells are tested for cancer.

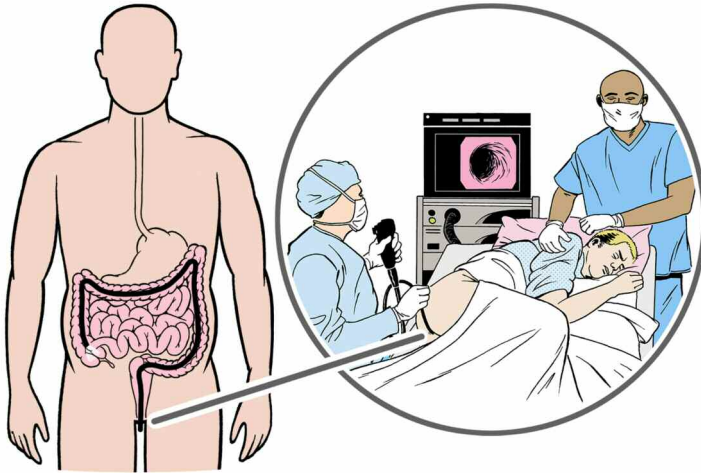


Cells

The tiny building blocks that make up people's bodies.

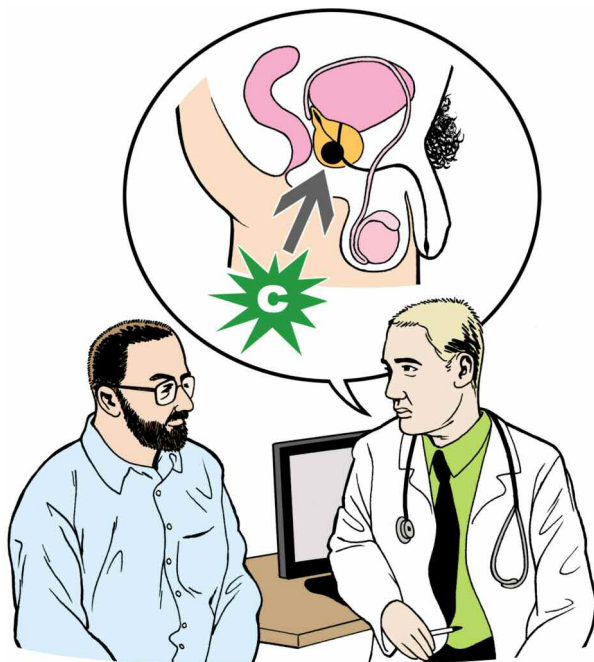


Word Bank



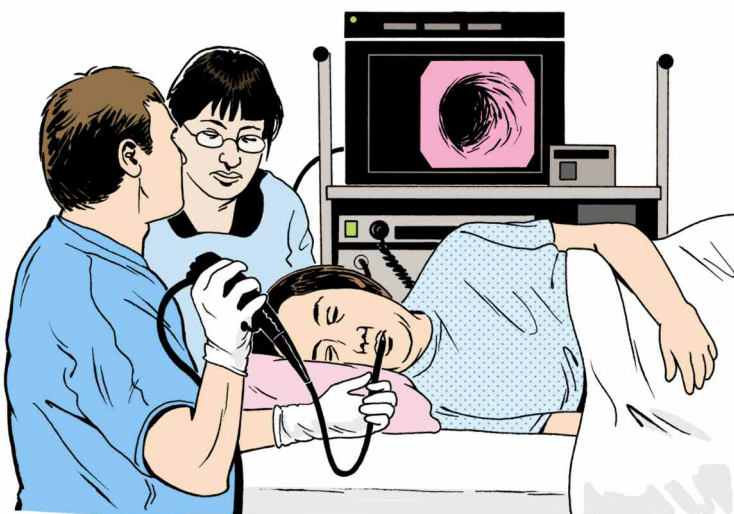
Colonoscopy

A test that lets the doctor look up your bottom and into your bowel. They use a long bendy tube with a tiny camera and a light on the end.



Diagnosis

A diagnosis is finding out whether you have an illness or not.

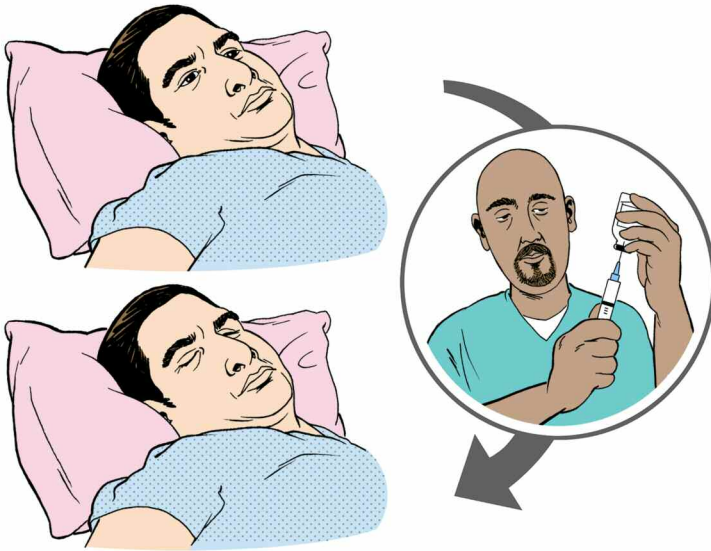


Endoscopy

This is looking down your throat and into your stomach using a long bendy tube with a tiny camera and light on the end.



Word Bank



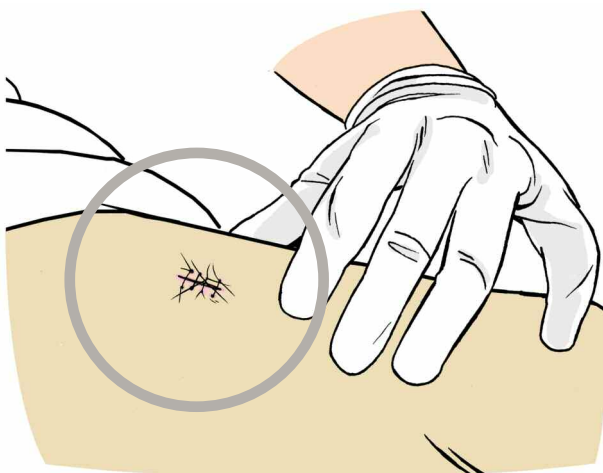
General anaesthetic

This is medicine to make you go to sleep for a short time, so you don't feel any pain when you have an operation.



Microscope

A microscope is what a doctor can use to look at very tiny things like cells. It makes the cells look a lot bigger so the doctor can see them.



Wound

A small cut made in your skin when your doctor does a biopsy.



17

Useful contacts



Drawing by Tracey Harrison

Volunteer and Illustrator with learning disabilities



Useful contacts

Helpful organisations

Cancer Research UK

A charity that is researching treatments for cancer. Its website has lots of information about cancer.

Phone: 0808 800 4040

Web: www.cancerresearchuk.org



Macmillan Cancer Support

A charity that helps people who have cancer. They give practical, medical and financial support. They try to make cancer care in the UK better.

Phone: 0808 808 00 00

Web: www.macmillan.org.uk

NHS Contacts

These contacts give you information about your health and health services:

England and Scotland **Phone:** 111

Wales **Phone:** 0845 46 47

Northern Ireland **Web:** www.hscni.net

Paul's Cancer Support Centre

Gives help, information and complementary therapies to people with cancer.

Phone: 0207 924 3924

Web: www.paulscancersupportcentre.org.uk



Useful contacts

RESPOND

Gives therapy to people with learning disabilities after trauma or abuse. They also offer training and support to carers.

Phone: 0808 808 07 00

Web: www.respond.org.uk

Written and audio material

Books Beyond Words

A series of picture books for people with learning disabilities. The books talk about cancer, health and bereavement.

Web: www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk

Phone: 020 8877 9799

Email: admin@booksbeyondwords.co.uk

FAIR Multimedia

Publishes a range of health leaflets, audio discs and CDs for people with learning disabilities. This includes a series on cancer.

Email: fair@fairadvice.org.uk

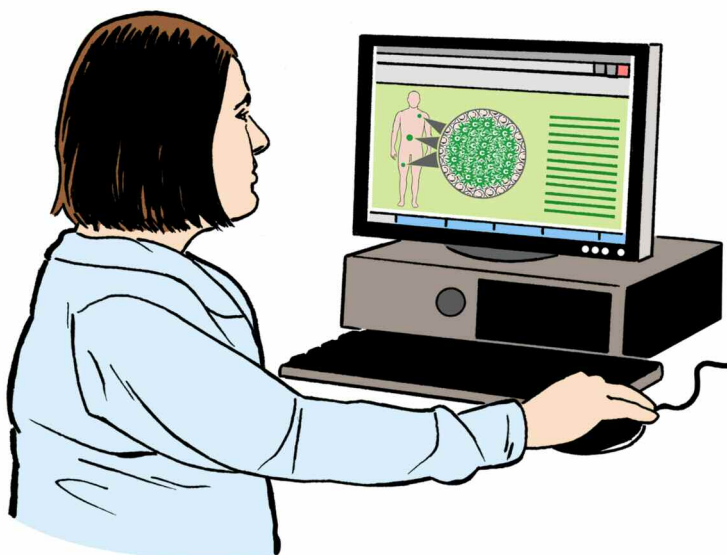
Phone: 0131 662 1962

Web: www.fairadvice.org.uk/health-publications.php



Useful contacts

Online help



www.easyhealth.org.uk

Has lots of online health information that is easy to understand.

www.macmillan.org.uk

Has lots of information about cancer and where to get help. You can also talk to other people with cancer in the online community.

Videos and DVDs

Leeds Animation Workshop

Has animated films on social issues for people with learning disabilities. There is one called 'Getting Better' about going to the doctor and the health clinic.

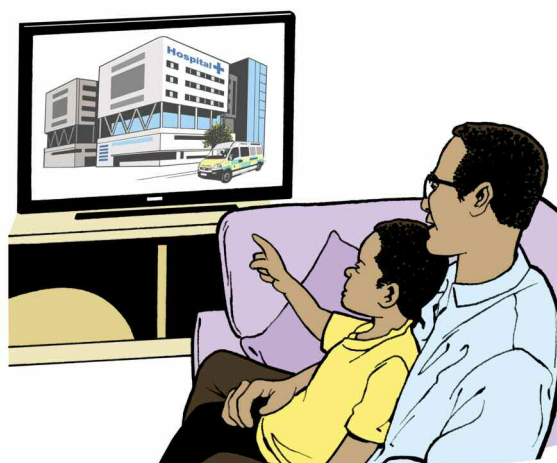
Phone: 0113 248 4997

Web: www.leedsanimation.org.uk/index.html

Speak Up Self Advocacy

Has DVDs and booklets for people with learning disabilities about health and illness.

Web: www.speakup.org.uk





CHANGE is a leading national Human Rights organisation led by disabled people. We work for equal rights for all people with learning disabilities. The cancer books and booklets that CHANGE have produced are part of an ongoing campaign to raise awareness about the issues of cancer for people with learning disabilities. You can call CHANGE on **0113 242 6619**, email **info@changepeople.org** or find us at **www.changepeople.org**

WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT

Macmillan Cancer Support has reviewed the information in this booklet and paid for it to be produced. They are a charity who help people with cancer. They have nurses and other health workers. They try to make cancer care in the UK better. They have experts who can answer your questions about cancer and how it affects your life. You can call **Macmillan** on **0808 808 00 00** or textphone **0808 808 0121 (Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm)**. Or go to **macmillan.org.uk**

This easy read booklet was produced by CHANGE

© **CHANGE 2016**