Fine Needle Biopsy - Solid Organ, Thyroid, And Superficial Masses

Your doctor has recommended that you have a fine needle biopsy of an unusual mass (lump) that has been detected by your doctor or on previous tests you have had. This procedure is performed under X-ray, Ultrasound, or Computed Tomography (CT) guidance in the Medical Imaging Department. The goal of the procedure is to obtain a small sample of the tissue from the affected organ with a very small needle to be analyzed under a microscope.

This procedure is performed with the assistance of local anesthetic (freezing) injected into the skin, muscle and fat of the abdominal wall. The procedure is done using sterile preparation of the biopsy site. Then the small needle is guided into the abnormal area to obtain a sample.

Complications of the biopsy procedure include the following.

1. Bleeding - This may be internal or external. It happens very rarely. In a large group of patients (11,700 patients) 0.05% (5/10,000) had significant problems with bleeding after a fine needle biopsy procedure.

2. Infection - This is very rare. We do our best to prevent this by using sterile technique.

Your doctor considers this procedure to be the safest and easiest way to acquire a sample of the abnormal organ. He or she is aware of the risks of this procedure and believe that the information to be gained out-weighs the associated risks.

You must be willing to accept the risks of this procedure in order to diagnose your illness and plan your treatment.