Paracentesis and Thoracentesis

This procedure involves the drainage of fluid in the abdomen (paracentesis) or chest (thoracentesis) for diagnostic and/or therapeutic purposes.

A small catheter is inserted into the collection of fluid under the guidance of ultrasound or CT Imaging. After the initial puncture and release of fluid, specimens may be collected and sent for analysis. The catheter tube can be connected to a vacuum bottle and often times many liters of fluid may be removed, if required. Sometimes a drainage tube will be left in place.

Risks will be discussed thoroughly with the patient prior to the procedure. Recover for 1 hr post procedure.

Preparation

- NPO for 4 hours
- Recent PTT, INR, hemoglobin, platelets must be within normal limits (recent = 1 week or less)
- continue all medications with the exception of anticoagulants (please see Guidelines for Physicians)