

Who can I contact if I have any questions?

Please do not hesitate to telephone the department on **01923 436095** for Watford General Hospital (8am – 6pm Monday to Friday).

If after the investigation you experience severe chest pain or shortness of breath, please attend your nearest Accident and Emergency department, do not drive.

- Accident and Emergency at Watford on 01923 217256
- Please note: there is **NO** Accident and Emergency at Hemel Hempstead or St Albans Hospitals.

Other sources of information: www.bsg.org.uk



A guide to...

Having a Bronchoscopy

If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217187** or email pals@whht.nhs.uk



If you are taking blood thinning medications such as warfarin, clopidogrel, ticagrelor, dabigatran, rivaroxaban or apixaban, please call the department on the number on your appointment letter to notify us.

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Patient information



What is a Bronchoscopy?

Bronchoscopy is an investigation that allows us to look directly into your windpipe (trachea), your airways (bronchi), and at some parts of your lungs. A bronchoscope (camera tube) is usually passed up through your nostril, past your voice box (larynx) down through the windpipe and into your airways. Through the tube we will be able to look for any abnormalities that may be present and if necessary we will be able to take small samples, brushings or washings. This may also include a transbronchial needle biopsy (TBNA), which is where a small amount of fluid is taken from lymph nodes next to the main air passage, or a transbronchial biopsy, which is where a small sample is taken from the outer part of the lung.

Preparation

This investigation must be done on an empty stomach. If you have a morning appointment it is important that you do not have anything to eat or drink from midnight the night before. If you have an afternoon appointment it is important that you do not have anything to eat after 9am and only water until 11am. This is to reduce the risk of vomiting during the procedure.

If you are taking any anti-inflammatory tablets (e.g. nurofen, ibuprofen etc) please stop these 3 days before your appointment. If you are taking diabetic medication you can contact your GP or nurse specialist for advice.

If your bronchoscopy appointment is in the afternoon then please take your morning medications, with the exception of any medication for diabetes. If you are taking blood thinning medication (**e.g. Aspirin, warfarin, clopidogrel, ticagrelor, dabigatran, rivaroxaban or apixaban**) then please contact the Respiratory Department at Watford General Hospital on 01923 217698 at least one week before your bronchoscopy appointment in order to receive instructions on whether these should be discontinued before the bronchoscopy appointment.

Please make sure you also bring with you a list of all medications.

What will happen?

When you arrive the doctor or nurse will explain the procedure and answer any questions you may have. You will be asked to sign the consent form giving us your permission to have the procedure performed. You will be asked to put on a gown and taken into the investigation room.

You will be put in a sitting position and be given some local anaesthetic spray to the back of the throat and up your nose. This will make you less likely to cough. We will then give you sedation through a small IV line placed in your hand or arm to make you sleepy and relaxed (this is not a general anaesthetic).

Once you are fully relaxed the doctor will pass the camera through a nostril or mouth down your windpipe into your lungs. You will be given oxygen through a sponge placed in the other nostril and monitored throughout the test.

Afterwards

After the procedure you will need to try and sleep for a short while before going home. The nurses will continue to monitor you. You will not be able to eat or drink for at least 2 hours after the test. You may need a routine x-ray of your chest and this will be done during the time you are recovering on the unit.

As this test is done using sedation, it is essential that you arrange for a responsible person to escort you home after the test. Failure to make these arrangements may result in the investigation being cancelled.

You may find that your throat feels a little sore for a day or so. You might also experience slight nosebleeds or blood streaks in your phlegm. This should pass in 24 hours or so.

The ward has mixed sex cubicles, but privacy and dignity will be maintained at all times.

When will I get the results of the test?

The doctors who have performed the test will usually see you in outpatient clinic 2-4 weeks after your test, when they have the results of any specimens.

Are there any risks?

Very rarely it is possible that following the test you may experience some bleeding or there may be some air leaking around your lung. If this does happen you may have to stay in hospital for observation or treatment.