

Information for patients

Bronchoscopy, laryngoscopy, micro-laryngoscopy, oesophagoscopy and panendoscopy

What is a bronchoscopy?

A bronchoscopy is a procedure that allows your doctor to see inside your lungs and breathing tract (bronchioles) using a thin flexible scope called a bronchoscope passed through your nose. Your doctor may take some tissue biopsies for testing.

What is a laryngoscopy?

A laryngoscopy is a procedure that allows your doctor to see inside your voice box (larynx) using a thin metal torch called a laryngoscope passed through your mouth. Your doctor may take some tissue biopsies for testing.

What is a micro-laryngoscopy?

A micro-laryngoscopy is a procedure that allows your doctor to see your voice box (larynx) using a thin flexible microscope passed through your mouth. Your doctor may take some tissue biopsies for testing. Polyps may also be removed at this time.

What is a oesophagoscopy?

An oesophagoscopy is a procedure that allows your doctor to see inside your throat and the tube that leads to your stomach (oesophagus) using a thin flexible scope called an oesophagoscope passed through your mouth. Your doctor may take some tissue biopsies for testing.

What is a panendoscopy?

A panendoscopy includes a bronchoscopy, laryngoscopy and oesophagoscopy. A thin flexible scope that is passed through your mouth is used to look at your throat, lungs and oesophagus. Your doctor may take some tissue biopsies for testing.

What happens before my operation?

Before surgery, some patients attend a pre-admission clinic where the doctor will explain the surgery and you will sign a consent form.

At the clinic, the health care team will ask you about your health, medication and lifestyle. They may test your blood, take x-rays and an electrocardiogram (ECG).

Your doctor will talk to you about what medications to take before you come into hospital. It is important to tell your doctor if you are taking any blood thinning medications, such as aspirin, warfarin or clopidogrel (Plavix).

Please bring your medications to hospital with you.

If you use a dosette box or pill organiser to take your tablets, please ask your pharmacist to print out a list of your current medications so you can bring this to hospital.

If you do not need to attend pre-admission clinic, we will telephone you and tell you when your surgery is scheduled and what to bring to hospital.

You may also receive a letter informing you of your time and date of surgery. Please make sure you confirm your date for surgery.

The day before your surgery, the hospital will call you between 2.30pm and 7pm to inform you of the time you need to stop eating and drinking and what time to come to hospital.

What will happen on the day of my operation?

We ask that you shower before you come into hospital and remove jewellery, make up, nail polish and fake nails. It is advised that you leave valuables such as jewellery and large sums of money at home to decrease the possibility of items being misplaced or stolen.

On the day of your surgery, please make your way to the St Vincent's Day of Surgery Admission (DOSA) area, which is located on the first floor of the In-patient Services Building, Princes Street, Fitzroy.

When you arrive the nursing staff will check your pulse and blood pressure.

You will need an anaesthetic for your surgery. The anaesthetist (the doctor who will give you the anaesthetic) will meet with you before your surgery to talk to you about your health and the best type of anaesthetic for you.

A general anaesthetic (anaesthetic to put you to sleep) is normally used for this procedure.

St Vincent's is a busy hospital so please be aware that you may need to wait up to three hours for your operation.

What happens during the surgery?

You will have a general anaesthetic for all these types of scope.

Depending on which scope you are having, the surgeon will pass the camera/scope through your mouth and into either your lungs, larynx or oesophagus. During the procedure, the surgeon will be able to view the findings and decide whether to take any tissue biopsies for testing.

What happens after the operation?

You will wake up from the anaesthetic in the recovery room and be transferred to your ward shortly after. A nurse will monitor your blood pressure, pulse, temperature and oxygen levels regularly.

You may have an oxygen mask to help you breathe and an intravenous (IV) drip in your arm giving you fluid. This will be removed once you are able to eat and drink. You will not be permitted to eat and drink until four hours after surgery. This is because you may feel sick, vomit or have pain after your surgery.

Your pain may be treated in a number of ways. This will be decided by you, your doctors and nurses depending on the type of pain you have. You may be given tablets or an injection to help you feel better.

It is normal post your procedure to cough up phlegm containing small amounts of blood.

When can I go home?

You will be required to stay in hospital for one night and will be able to go home the morning after your operation.

Patients are usually discharged at 10am so the room can be prepared for another patient.

Before you leave the ward someone will:

- make a follow-up appointment for you at St Vincent's Specialist Clinics
- give you medication if prescribed by your doctor
- provide a medical certificate if required (please make sure you ask for one)
- send a letter from the hospital to your local doctor (GP).

Please remember to take your belongings including x-rays home with you.

What should I do once I get home?

Your doctor may recommend one week off work after the operation to give your body the best chance of recovery.

You should avoid doing any strenuous activity, especially lifting anything heavy. Do not lift anything more than 2-3kg (roughly the weight of a bag of oranges) for two weeks after surgery.

If you are bleeding or cough up large amounts of blood, please make your way to your GP or your nearest emergency department.

Contacts

Coordinator, Head and Neck Multidisciplinary Clinic

Tel: 9288 2755

Waiting List Officer

Tel: 9288 2271

This information sheet is intended as a guideline only. If you have further questions or concerns, please speak to your doctor.