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vitamins, herbs, and supplements, as well as if you have allergies to any medicines.

You might be asked to stop taking blood-thinning medicines (including aspirin) for several days before the test. You might also be asked not to eat or drink anything for at least several hours before the procedure. Your doctor or nurse will give you specific instructions. Be sure to follow them, and to ask questions if you don't understand something.

Getting the test

Mediastinoscopy can usually be done as an outpatient procedure (you don't need to stay overnight in a hospital).

For this test, you will be given drugs through an intravenous (IV) line to put you in a deep sleep (under general anesthesia). A tube will be put into your throat and hooked up to a breathing machine while the procedure is being done. A small cut is made just above the breastbone and the mediastinoscope is slowly made just

Your doctor or nurse should give you specific instructions on what you can and can't do in the hours after the test.

If biopsies were done as part of the procedure, the results typically will be ready within a few days, although results of some tests on the biopsy samples might take longer. You will need to follow up with your doctor after the procedure to get your results.

Possible complications of mediastinoscopy

Mediastinoscopy is usually safe, but there is a small risk of:

- Bleeding
- Pneumonia (infection in the lung)
- Collapse of part of a lung (pneumothorax)
- Hoarseness
- Infection of the incisions (cuts)

Your doctor might order a chest x-ray after the mediastinoscopy to check for pneumothorax (or other lung problems). Some problems might go away on their own, but if they're causing symptoms (such as trouble breathing) they might need to be treated.

Your doctor or nurse should give you specific instructions on when you might need to call the doctor's office (for problems such as chest pain, trouble breathing, coughing up blood, or a fever that doesn't go away). Be sure you understand when you should call.

Hyperlinks

1. www.cancer.org/cancer/lung-cancer.html
2. www.cancer.org/cancer/thymus-cancer.html
3. www.cancer.org/cancer/esophagus-cancer.html
4. www.cancer.org/cancer/lymphoma.html

References

Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer Treatment (PDQ®)—Patient Version.
<https://www.cancer.gov/types/lung/patient/non-small-cell-lung-treatment-pdq>

Written by