

Ascitic Tap

Patient Information

What is Ascitic Tap?

An ascitic tap is a procedure performed under ultrasound guidance to drain fluid trapped in the abdomen.

What to bring:

Please bring any relevant imaging scans (film packet or a CD containing X-rays, CT scans, ultrasound or MRIs etc.).

Preparation:

You may be required to have a blood test prior to your ascitic tap to check your blood clotting levels.

Arrange for someone to take you home from your procedure.

Eating and drinking:

You may eat but a light meal only, you may drink as normal.

Medications:

Tell staff at the time of booking if you are taking any:

- Blood thinning medications (e.g., Warfarin, Xarelto, Rivaroxaban, Pradaxa, Apixaban, Eliquis),
- Antiplatelet medications (e.g., Clopidogrel, Plavix, Aspirin)

You will be informed if you need to stop taking these medications before your procedure.

Continue taking other medications as prescribed, unless directed otherwise by medical or nursing staff prior to your procedure.

Please bring a list of all your medications with you to your appointment.

Procedure:

On arrival to the hospital a nurse will discuss with you your medical history and insert a small plastic tube (cannula) into a vein in your hand or arm.

You will be lying on a bed and the doctor will locate the fluid in your abdomen using the ultrasound and determine the safest approach to drain the fluid.

The doctor will explain the procedure and discuss with you the potential risks and you will be asked to sign a consent form. Your heart rate and blood pressure will be monitored during the procedure by nursing staff.

Your skin will be cleaned with an antiseptic wash, and local anaesthetic will be used to numb a small section of your skin on your abdomen.

A small incision will be made and a thin needle with the drain tube attached will be inserted into the abdomen through the numb patch of skin.

The needle will be removed leaving the drain tube in place. The drain tube will be secured with a dressing and left in place to drain.

Post Procedure Care:

You will return to the general ward at Leongatha Hospital for the duration of the drainage where you will be monitored by the nursing staff.

Once the fluid has stopped draining the tube will be carefully removed and a dressing will be placed over the procedure site.

If you have a large amount of fluid drained, you may require some fluid called albumin replaced via the cannula in your arm.

Your doctor will discuss this with you if it is required.

Discharge:

Generally, you will be able to go home the same day as your procedure if you have no other medical conditions or concerns that require further treatment.

You will be provided with an information sheet regarding discharge instructions upon completion of your procedure.

Results:

The results together with the procedure report will be sent to your referring doctor. Return to your doctor to discuss examination results.

Radiation Risk

Most medical imaging tests, except MRI and ultrasound, involve exposure to radiation from X-rays. Your doctor considers that the benefits of the examination you require to be greater than the small risk posed by the radiation exposure.

Any questions please contact us.

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Leongatha Hospital

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